

THE ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF AMERICAN MILITARY COMMISSARIES



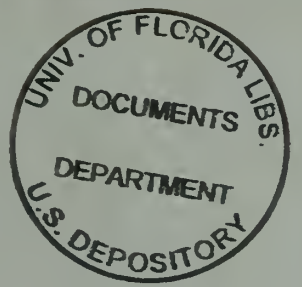
Vol. 2

**The Defense Commissary Agency
and its Predecessors since 1989**

DEFENSE CO



FLARE



COMMISSARY AGENCY



The ILLUSTRATED HISTORY of AMERICAN MILITARY COMMISSARIES

Vol. 2

The Defense Commissary Agency and its Predecessors: Since 1989

FIRST EDITION
2008

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*Any opinions expressed herein are those of the author
and do not necessarily represent those of the
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FLARE



THIS PAGE: A retiree couple enjoying the Bellwood commissary at the Defense Supply Center, Richmond, Virginia. DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt

COVER PHOTO: A young mother has her boys firmly in hand and in tow as they visit the Naval Station Mayport, Florida, commissary in 1991. DeCA photo

INSIDE COVER PHOTO: Shortly before DeCA's official activation, many of the headquarters staff posed for a photo, giving the "thumbs up," which at that point essentially meant "all systems go." DeCA photo: Herb Greene, airborne from a cherry picker

PREVIOUS PAGES: In the 1980s, the Spanish Colonial-style façade of the commissary at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio provided a dazzling entrance to two converted warehouses from which an exceptionally long commissary was constructed. TSA photo, DeCA historical file

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"A blank piece of paper."

— Maj. Gen. John P. Dreska, referring to the Transition Team's rare opportunity to start an entirely new organization from scratch, with no preconceived plans or notions.

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CONFLICT, CATASTROPHE, 1989 - 1991 AND CONSOLIDATION

AFTER WORLD WAR II, the commissaries weathered everything from the anti-commissary lobby of the 1950s to the Grace Commission of the early 1980s. But as the 1980s drew to a close, the one thing that would force a major change was the very thing for which the nation and its military—including the commissaries—had worked since 1945: victory in the Cold War.

There's a special irony in this. Commissaries had, after all, helped to win the Cold War. They had played an unheralded but important role, supporting U.S. forces in Europe and Asia by helping to maintain morale. They did this through the simple expedient of making life more enjoyable for military families stationed overseas, as well as by supplementing military paychecks through savings on groceries. Both made life in the armed forces far more attractive for recruitment and re-enlistment than it otherwise would have been.



DeCA CUSTOMER BILL OF RIGHTS

CUSTOMERS HAVE THE RIGHT TO EXPECT

ARTICLE I -
PROFESSIONAL, COURTEOUS SERVICE

ARTICLE II -
CLEAN, PLEASANT STORE

ARTICLE III -
FRESH, HIGH QUALITY MERCHANDISE

ARTICLE IV -
WELL-STOCKED SHELVES

ARTICLE V -
THE BEST POSSIBLE PRICES

ARTICLE VI -
QUICK EFFICIENT CHECKOUT

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
DEFENSE COMMISSARY AGENCY
FORT LEE, VA.

1991: CUSTOMER BILL OF RIGHTS.

Petty Officer Joe May posts the "DeCA Customer Bill of Rights" at the Naval Security Group Activity Edzell, Scotland, commissary.

Photo courtesy RAF Edzell, DeCA historical file

But victory in the Cold War ultimately meant fewer troops, and thus fewer commissaries, were needed. On October 1, 1991, there were more than 400 commissary locations; fifteen years later the number was under 270, a loss of more than 10 per year. The decline in locations was due almost entirely to the posts and bases that had closed, both in the United States and overseas. If the Cold War had continued, most of those installations would still be operating, and so would their commissaries.

Congress had for decades repeatedly rejected attempts to privatize or eliminate the commissary benefit. By 1989, however, it was looking more favorably upon consolidation of the services' separate systems as a viable alternative, a way to preserve the benefit while cutting costs and holding off commissary opponents. However, for the people working in the services' commissary systems, consolidation had long been the subject of worries, rumor, and speculation. Many feared consolidation would be the first step toward bringing about the end of the benefit.

Consolidation was feared for three major reasons: First, the commissary budget would no longer be hidden within the budgets of the separate services. It would

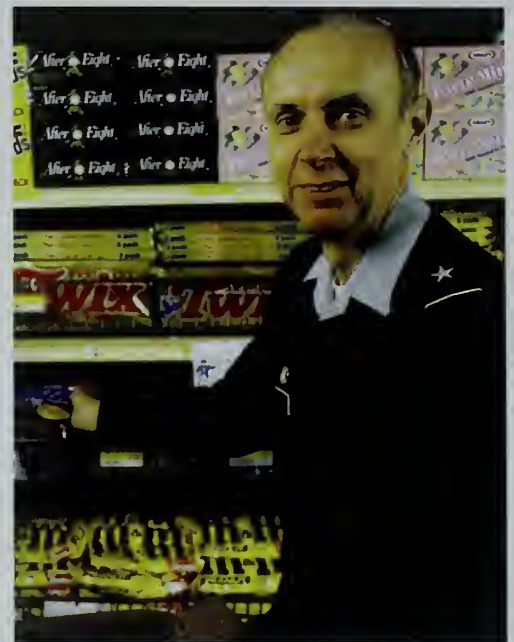
instead be one large, combined target, almost inviting criticism and budget cutting. Second, it was widely believed the Defense Department would not go to any great lengths to protect the benefit, as each of the services did. Finally, each service tenaciously guarded its own commissary system. Each wanted to "care for its own," and each believed its way of administering the commissary benefit was the method best suited to its needs.

COMMISSARY SYSTEMS IN 1989

The services' commissary systems were at their zenith in 1989. A look at the commissary systems as they existed then provides a useful benchmark for comparing the pre-DeCA era with the system that existed two years later.

In 1989, the U.S. Army Troop Support Agency (TSA) was headquartered in Weatherly Hall, Building P-12400, at Fort Lee, Virginia. TSA ran 177 commissaries distributed through five regions, worldwide, and was also responsible for troop support in a number of areas, including laundry, the issue of rations, and the preparation of food items in the field.

TSA's European Region, stretching from northern Germany to Saudi Arabia, was



BRIG. GEN. JAMES S. HAYES, Troop Support Agency commander from 1984 to 1989, visits the Fort Lee, Virginia, commissary in the spring of 1989.

Military Market, Army Times Publications

divided into six districts. The Munich district had the far-flung responsibility for all Army stores from southernmost Germany to Italy, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia.

The Navy ran eighty-five commissary operations, as well as all of its numerous exchange operations, through the Navy



1989: AFComs Commissary Officers, most of whom are wearing their trademark red coats, give the "thumbs up" at their worldwide conference in San Antonio, Texas. Joining them, front and center, wearing glasses and in uniform, is AFComs commander, Maj. Gen. M. Gary Alkire; at Alkire's right hand is deputy to the commander, Roy C. Speight. The rest of the front row consists of region directors. (From left) Lt. Col. Harry Mamaux, Leon Gist, Col. Terry Fowler, John McGowan, Col. Jim Scott, Col. Frank Dooley (in uniform to Alkire's left), Bob Tate, Dick Maness, and Candi Corrada. *AFComs photo, DeCA historical file*

Resale and Services Support Office (NAVRESSO), headquartered at Naval Station Staten Island, New York. The Commissary Operations Group managed the commissary portion of NAVRESSO's responsibilities, and field support offices supported the stores on a geographical basis. Unlike the Army and Air Force, the Navy often combined many of its commissaries and exchange facilities in the same mall, and sometimes under one roof.

The Air Force Commissary Service (AFCOMS) had its headquarters in Thompson Hall, Building 3030, on the east annex of Kelly Air Force Base, Texas. It operated 142 commissaries and used nine regions to oversee its stores. The agency was also responsible for Air Force troop support, which it accomplished through issuing rations (particularly MREs—Meals Ready to Eat), supporting field food supply and preparation, and providing troop issue goods and food for dining facilities.

The agency had frequently changed its regions and complexes. In 1976, it had started with four regions, and had arrived at nine regions in 1989 after a number of reorganizations that included multiple regions and complexes. AFCOMS had already scheduled the reduction of its nine-region alignment to seven with the deactivation of two—California and North Central—as of July 1, 1990. In fact, one of the reasons for AFCOMS employees' initial reticence about the Jones Commission and the possibility of consolidation was that they had already experienced multiple reorganizations. For them, it had seemed as though things would finally be settling down until rumors of consolidation reached San Antonio.



1990: ID CHECK. Assistant Commissary Officer Bob Yerkan checks an ID card at Naval Station Seattle's Sand Point commissary. After working at the Sand Point store since 1983, Yerkan became its commissary officer in 1994. He went to the new Smokey Point store as its commissary officer from 1995 to 2001, and then was the store director at Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada, from 2001 until his retirement in 2004. He had been in federal service for thirty-seven years.

NAVRESSO photo, DeCA historical file

In 1989, the Marine Corps Commissary Office (MCC), which belonged to the Marine Corps Services Division, was located in the Commonwealth Building on Wilson Boulevard in Rosslyn, Virginia. It was very close to the Marine Corps Memorial (the famous Iwo Jima statue) in Arlington Cemetery, and was not far from the Pentagon. It was the only commissary agency with its headquarters in the Washington, D.C. area.

The Marines ran fifteen stores, thirteen of which were divided among two com-

plexes, one on each coast. Two stores were not assigned to either complex: Iwakune, Japan, and Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii. Except for those two stores, MCC procurement was at complex level.

The Coast Guard was not a part of the consolidation, but Coast Guard commissary operations were eventually assumed by DeCA. As of 1989, the Coast Guard had numerous and widespread exchanges but owned exactly one commissary—located on Kodiak Island in the Aleutians—and a grocery section in an exchange at Governors Island, New York. Purchasing, both by exchanges and commissaries, was done at store level.

In many ways the separate commissary systems were as different as the services they supported. However, there were some similarities. For example, all had military and civilian personnel in their stores, and each system ordered brand-name products using Defense Personnel Support Center contracts.

Under one name or another, each of these organizations had been operating for more than a dozen years. None had ever looked favorably upon privatization, shrinking the size of their operations, shifting to non-appropriated funds (NAF) for support, or consolidation. All the commis-



1990: TWENTYNINE PALMS. Built in 1988, the commissary at Twentynine Palms, California, was financed by Marine Corps surcharge funds. At the time, the Marines had only fifteen stores, so surcharge funds were limited; joining DeCA enabled the Marines to "build out" all their stores—that is, modernize by either replacement with a new store, or by extensive renovation—within just a few years. This commissary was named "Best Commissary" in the Marine Corps in 1990. *Exchange and Commissary News*

ary organizations, as well as their parent services, saw in such proposals the possible erosion, or even the end, of the benefit. With the backing of key congressmen and an outraged constituency of commissary customers—who had never been shy about writing to their representatives—the services had been able to maintain their separate commissary organizations. However, the rules were about to change. After World War II, souring relations with the Soviet Union had convinced the United States that an American worldwide military presence was essential to maintaining world peace. Now, the USSR was about to collapse, drastically changing the size, scope, and direction of American military operations.

Because the USSR presented a diminishing threat, commissary consolidation was endorsed by many of the commissaries' friends in Congress. They wanted to see the benefit preserved, but feared that post-Cold War political and economic pressure to do away with the stores would be too great to resist. Their hope was that consolidation of the four commissary organizations would save appropriated funds and thus protect the benefit from the charge that the stores were too costly. This concern became increasingly important as the end of the Cold War began to have a direct effect on the military's mission, size, and budget.

END OF THE SOVIET UNION; START OF MILITARY DRAWDOWNS

The thawing of the Cold War had begun almost imperceptibly. Détente—the acceptance of the status quo and the resultant lessening of tensions—had come and gone in the 1970s, but began to reappear in the late 1980s. Poland's Solidarity movement began to meet with success. Words such as *glasnost*, *perestroika*—openness, restructuring—had an encouraging ring to them. The Soviets invaded Afghanistan, only to end up in a quagmire. The USSR's Baltic republics began to reassert their Western roots and political tendencies. There was open talk of reuniting Germany. Events happened that no one had ever expected to see: a failed coup against Premier Mikhail Gorbachev, Soviet tanks in the streets of Moscow back-

ing the Russian people instead of the Party or the generals, and Boris Yeltsin, the new president of the Russian Federation, standing atop armored military vehicles and instantly becoming world-famous. Everything happened at a stunningly quick pace.

With the end of the Cold War in sight, the general impression was that America could reap a "peace dividend" by reducing its military and saving taxpayer money, and still be able to respond to any threats. Those in favor of drawing down the military felt that the nation would be able to rely increasingly upon the National Guard, the Reserves, and technology.

Long before the demise of the Soviet Union began to appear imminent, Congress had already been looking for ways to trim the military budget. When the opportunity presented itself, the legislators were ready. Those who favored keeping larger forces pointed to the need to maintain stability in the event of the Soviet collapse; indeed, as it turned out, the Balkans soon became a major trouble spot when Yugoslavia broke into ethnic pieces. There were also the problems of the Middle East, with which the United States had already contended for years, and the lurking threat of terrorism.

As had been the case for decades, the commissaries continued to be a favorite target for budget cuts. When the Cold War was declared to be over and won, the congressional goal was to save money immediately, and get America's allies to bear more of the defense burden in Europe. Drawdown, consolidation, and BRAC (base realignment and closure) became the watchwords. Bases in the United States and overseas were slated for closure; dozens more inherited new missions and units.

Forces would be cut and bases closed, directly and adversely impacting commissaries. The benefit faced significant challenges and would have to undergo radical changes to survive.

The challenges were made even more difficult by the deaths of the commissaries' two most powerful congressional advocates, Congressmen W. C. "Dan" Daniel and William Flynt "Bill" Nichols, in 1988. Both had been staunch friends of the mili-



tary and the commissary benefit, and had helped hold the line against the Grace Commission. Daniel had been particularly critical of the Grace Commission's methods and conclusions.

Anticipating changes that now seemed unavoidable, friends of the commissaries in Congress and in the Defense Department began examining how to preserve the benefit in some form, while simultaneously achieving significant cost savings to the customer and to the government.

THE JONES COMMISSION

On March 2, 1989, Marvin Leath, chairman of the Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Panel of the House Armed



1989: SAN VITO de NORMANNI. Built in 1964, this store at the former Brindisi Air Station in southern Italy was a branch of the Vicenza commissary. Staff Sgt. Linzy W. Childers used seventy-one gallons of paint to turn the exterior wall of the warehouse into an "AFCOMS" sign 81 feet long and 27 feet high, with letters 8 feet tall and a "Wright Flyer" (a symbol AFCOMS used on shelf talkers to signify a great price on a "Right Buy") with a 10-foot wingspan. The painting took 110 hours to complete. AFCOMS photo, DeCA historical file

Services Committee's Subcommittee on Readiness, wrote to then-Maj. Gen. Donald W. Jones (U.S. Army), deputy assistant secretary of defense (military manpower and personnel policy). Leath directed the department to "initiate a comprehensive study of the commissary system" and an "unrestricted baseline reassessment" of how the benefit was being delivered.

Leath reiterated he was interested in protecting the commissaries, and noted the 1989 National Defense Authorization Act strongly endorsed the benefit by prohibiting commissary privatization. He believed, however, that the time had come to reexamine the commissary systems. Because of the shifting political situation and the

imminent budgetary changes that would occur as soon as the Soviet Union was no longer deemed a viable threat, the time had come to find a way of preserving the benefit in a cost-cutting era.

The logic behind this reassessment was simple: To many in Congress, the existing system seemed extravagant and parochial, with overlapping, redundant command and region structures, offices, and functions—far more infrastructure than was needed for one headquarters and one set of region organizations to do the job. Having one organization would reduce the number of personnel needed to run the system, reducing costs to the taxpayer, but still maintaining the benefit.

As directed, the newly promoted Lt. Gen. Jones formed and chaired a study group of twenty-three members. Predictably, it became known as the Jones Commission. In April 1989, it began meeting at the Pentagon and in nearby Crystal City in Alexandria, Virginia, to begin its baseline reassessment of military commissary programs. Air Force Col. Richard J. Tessier, from AFCOMS, served as Jones' chief of staff. The other key officer on the commission was Army Lt. Col. E. J. "Vince" Vincent.

Patrick B. Nixon, a future region director and an eventual director of the agency that would result from the Jones study, was the leader of the Marine Corps commis-

1989: THE JONES COMMISSION.

Some of the members of the Jones Commission gathered for this group photo (front row, from left): Tom Milks, Air Force Col. Richard Tessier, Army Lt. Col. E. J. Vincent, Air Force Sgt. Mickalyn G. Clarke, Army Spc. Lashunder Hodge, and James P. Gildersleeve. Middle row: Marine Corps Lance Cpl. William Root, Vincent R. Folio, Hugh M. Frampton, Arlene Ripp, Margaret F. "Peggy" Young, and Ron Clark. Back row: Frances Fleming, Tom Rowe, and Marvin Beck. *DeCA historical file*



saries at the time. He recalls, "I did as much as I could to familiarize Col. Tessier and Lt. Col. Vincent with the Marine Corps business system and practices. I personally believed the Marines had the most retail-oriented of the business systems, just as the other services all believed they were best in one area or another."

The commission's draft report, released in September 1989, pointed out weaknesses in the existing systems and favored creating a single commissary agency. The commission's final report, released on December 14, 1989, recommended only two options: keep the status quo, with several adjustments; or completely consolidate all DoD commissaries.

Not surprisingly, the reaction to all this by the services' commissary agencies was unfavorable. The most negative reaction was probably at AFCOMS, where the new commander, Maj. Gen. Robert F. Swarts, called a special staff meeting to address the Jones Commission's final report, discuss its implications and possible ramifications, and prepare a suitable response. The staff agreed that the basic response should voice AFCOMS' opposition to consolidating DoD commissaries; if, however, DoD insisted upon consolidation, then AFCOMS, believing itself to be the best commissary organization, with the best

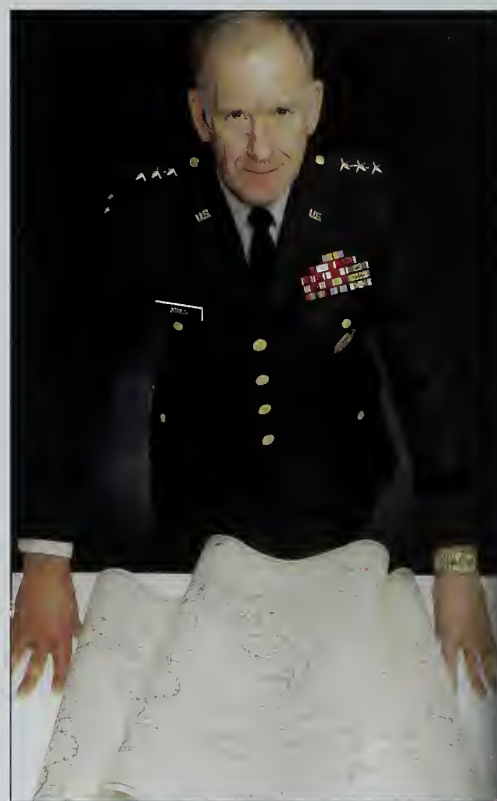
commissaries, wished to be the lead service in the effort.

While some AFCOMS personnel considered this gutsy ("hutzpah," is how one person put it), the other services perceived it as condescending. Either way, Swarts' offer did not enhance his chances of becoming the head of the new agency. It played well with the Air Force, but it alienated some possible allies in the other services, and in Congress as well.

In contrast, the Marines, convinced their computer and accounting systems were best-suited to be the lead service, nonetheless acquiesced early on to a consolidated system. They saw it was in their best long-term interest.

Nixon remembered years later, "Ultimately, because of the size of the Marine Corps systems, it would never have had the funds to 'build out'* its construction needs. And the big advantage that the Marine Corps got from DeCA was that all of its stores were going to be built out within the first three or four years. And for that reason, it was in the best interest of the Marine Corps patron for the Marines to vote in support of DeCA. So they did."

In the long run, it really didn't matter whether the services supported the idea or not. It soon became obvious that resistance was simply not going to work. Both



ARMY LT. GEN. Donald W. Jones led a study group, known as the Jones Commission, that took a critical look at how the commissary benefit was being delivered, and how it could be improved. *Military Market, Army Times Publications*

Congress and DoD bought into the concept of a single agency, and it was going to become reality.

In March 1990, Jones appeared before the House Armed Services Committee's

*— 'Build out' meant upgrading and modernizing all commissaries in the Marine Corps system, by either extensively remodeling existing stores, or by replacing them with brand-new facilities.

Readiness Subcommittee along with the four commanders of the commissary services: Swarts of AFCONS, Brig. Gen. Charles E. St. Arnaud of TSA, Rear Adm. H. Donald Weatherson of NAVRESSO, and Brig. Gen. Wayne T. "Tom" Adams of the Marine Corps Services Division. They submitted written statements for the record but had little chance to say anything. The committee was predisposed to allow consolidation to take place, and the issue was realistically no longer open to discussion. The hearing amounted to little more than the exchange of a few platitudes, "thank-yous" and "well-dones." The writing was on the wall. Consolidation was going to become a reality. But the hearing left unanswered the major question of what form the new agency would take: a service-run or a DoD-run agency?

DeCA's ESTABLISHMENT

On April 12, 1990, a memorandum from Deputy Secretary of Defense Donald Atwood announced that a single, consolidated commissary agency would be established, with oversight being held by Colin McMillan, assistant secretary of defense for production and logistics (ASD/PL). This memo did not specify the agency's nature or establish any operational guidelines. Atwood specified that by May 15, McMillan would give him a recommendation on whether the new organization would be a new DoD agency or a component of an existing agency.

When May 15 arrived, another memorandum from Atwood officially established the Defense Commissary Agency as a new, provisional organization, and announced it was being formed to consolidate the commissary systems of the military departments. It would be an entirely new agency, separate from the services and answering directly to the Defense Department. The director of the new agency would report to assistant secretary McMillan. Within five days, McMillan's office was allocated \$3 million for initial operations and maintenance resources for the transition period. McMillan's office was to coordinate with other government officials to assemble a transition team and submit a charter direc-



FROM THE START, Dreska made it clear that he needed "a team effort, a Total Quality Management effort. We were going to play by the rules of continuous improvement, trying to improve everything that we did." He asked them to leave their service mindset behind: "It was going to be a 'purple' organization (a Defense agency, not biased toward any of the services) ... "

— Maj. Gen. John P. Dreska's directions to the DeCA transition team

tive for the new agency in mid-July 1990.

The stage was now set for the new organization. What remained to be seen was how it would come together while the services continued to run their systems and their individual stores. Soon, the military's primary attention would be on a rapid overseas buildup and conflict in the Persian Gulf.

THE DeCA TRANSITION TEAM

On May 17, 1990, McMillan sent a memo to the assistant secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force, and to the director of the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA), asking for nominations to the DoD Commissary System Transition Team—the "best and brightest talent to help orchestrate this transition to the new agency." Once the nominations were made, McMillan, with the assistance of Vincent from the Jones Commission, selected the first team members and announced their names a month later. Known as the transition team (and later the DeCA transition team, DeCATT), it included personnel from all the existing commissary agencies and components of the Defense Logistics Agency, particularly the Defense Personnel Support Center (DPSC).

In June, McMillan announced the first director of the new Defense Commissary

Agency would be Army Maj. Gen. John P. Dreska, who at the time was the commander of the Defense Construction Supply Center in Columbus, Ohio. He had also been the commander of the Army's Distribution Depot in New Cumberland, Pennsylvania. The Army had nominated him as that service's candidate. He would later say he was never quite sure as to why he was chosen, but part of the reason may have been that he had no particular loyalties to any of the existing commissary agencies and could be entirely even-handed in dealing with each of them.

The Navy had not nominated a candidate, apparently preferring to concentrate on keeping control of their exchange system. The Marines, with the smallest of the service systems, also made no nominations. While both the Navy and Marines anticipated upgrades in their facilities from the new agency, they both trusted the Army and Air Force commissary professionals to do a good job managing and upgrading their commissaries. The trust was not misplaced.

The only other realistic candidate for the position of agency director other

than Dreska was Air Force Maj. Gen. Robert F. Swarts from AFCONS. It's possible that McMillan, wishing to avoid appointing anyone who might be accused



COLIN McMILLAN, assistant secretary of defense for production and logistics, had oversight of the new consolidated commissary agency. DeCA

photo: Army Sgt. 1st Class Derryl Fields

of harboring parochial attitudes or prejudices, had already decided not to select any of the commanders from the existing commissary agencies.

Swarts had initially opposed the Jones Commission's findings, and had later suggested that the Air Force should be given the lead in the new agency. His candor may not have served him very well in the short run. But Swarts and Dreska shared two important traits: They both wanted to preserve the benefit, and neither pulled any punches. They both said exactly what they thought and were straight shooters. When Dreska received the appointment, Swarts gave him his full endorsement, and committed AFCONS to making sure DeCA wouldn't fail.

The next key appointment was Dreska's choice of Army Col. William J. Flanagan as his chief of staff. The two had worked together before, and Flanagan, with years of experience with the Troop Support Agency and DLA, was well qualified to help create a new commissary agency. Dreska later recalled, "I needed someone that I could trust, that would see things the way I saw them, and who would not be afraid to tell me I was crazy. I knew Bill was quite capable of doing that, having already done it for me for two years."

Together, the two would steer the transition team on a course that would get the new agency up and running in fifteen months. It was a remarkable effort that went largely unappreciated at the time by commissary customers, employees, and Congress alike. It was unnoticed by design. The change from the old agencies to the new was largely transparent to the customers, who noticed no drop-off in service. That was exactly what Dreska intended.

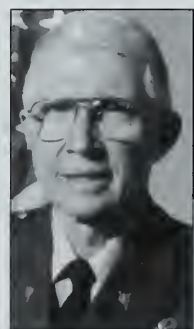
On the evening of July 8, 1990, before their initial meeting with the transition



**Maj. Gen.
Robert F. Swarts**



**Brig. Gen.
Charles
St. Arnaud**



**Col. William J.
Flanagan**

team, Dreska and Flanagan met at the general's home to lay out the agency's strategy for the following six months. The next day, the transition team's first meeting took place. Patrick Nixon later remembered it: "I had never met Dreska before, and he was there, with his chief of staff, Colonel Bill Flanagan, and there were maybe ten people as part of the team around the room. That first day, they had a butcher block easel set up there with nothing on it, and General Dreska said, 'This is what we're starting with.' That is, a blank page, open to ideas and suggestions."

The transition team began meeting in Washington, D.C., but two weeks later moved to offices near Tyson's Corner, Virginia. Dreska later recalled that from the start, he made it clear he needed "a team effort, a Total Quality Management effort. We were going to play by the rules of continuous improvement, trying to improve everything that we did." He asked them to leave their service mindset behind: "It was going to be a 'purple' organization (a defense agency, not biased toward any of the services), so I didn't want people on the team to be reporting back to their bosses,

and I told them so. After a month or two, I saw that the people on the transition team were really dedicated to getting this thing done, and they more or less lost their service parochialism."

Nixon found the whole process intriguing. "In establishing a defense agency, to just talk about merging four retail operations into a \$6-billion business, that's one thing; but to establish an agency, and to have to go through the rules and regulations that are required to do that, and to write a charter, and get it approved, and then there are the dynamics of getting four services to agree—it was all going to be a real challenge.

"For resourcing, we had to get the

money from the services, when we had a concept we had to get their approval on it, and we had these meetings with General Swarts and General St. Arnaud. Some of it got pretty contentious, but the dynamics of it were quite an experience. Then there were also the dealings with Mr. McMillan, and the dealings with DoD, making the situation even more complex."

DeCA, AS ORIGINALLY ENVISIONED

Dreska later recalled what he considered to be the first orders of business: "solidifying the DeCA charter ... a road map with milestones to transition from the four services agencies into one. ... a one- to two-year transition plan, and a five-year 'where we're going to go' plan ... personnel actions to staff the provisional as well as the new organization ... and making sure the rights of employees were guarded."

Dreska wanted everything the new organization did to be based upon the single question, "What is best for the customer?" He wanted that notion "embedded in our work ethic and our daily work habits ... no matter what job you have in this agency, somewhere along the line your efforts translate into customer service." He wanted every DeCA employee to "personally commit to customer service as a foundation for all we do."

THE DeCA CHARTER

When DeCA was established as a provisional organization on October 1, 1990, it was supposed to immediately begin assuming control of the services' existing business and computer systems. But Operation Desert Shield had begun, soon to be followed by Operation Desert Storm, distracting the services and requiring people and resources. The new business system was not ready to merge the services' four separate systems. DeCA did not begin phasing in its control until months later.

On November 9, 1990, Deputy Secretary of Defense Donald Atwood issued directive DoD Directive 5105.55, which, in slightly more than seven pages, covered the agency's purpose, responsibilities, applicability, mission, organization,



1990: THE DECA TRANSITION TEAM met in a commander's conference on August 8 in Alexandria, Virginia, to set the stage for consolidating the four services' commissary systems. FRONT ROW (from left): Roy Speight, Margaret F. "Peggy" Young, Col. William Flanagan, Brig. Gen. Charles St. Arnaud, Rear Adm. Harvey Weatherson, William Sharkey, Maj. Gen. John Dreska, Maj. Gen. Robert Swarts, Brig. Gen. John Arick, Capt. Howard "Ned" Kuhns, Gordon Jones, Russell Zimmerman, and Jacques Loraine. MIDDLE ROW: Lt. Col. Wayne Griess, Walt Winters, Michael Gaston, Col. Cesar Morel, Gary Lutz, James Doherty, S. Dwight Hall, Marvin Beck, Crosby Johnson, Cdr. Mark Weston, and Kenneth Perrotte. BACK ROW: Michael Dowling, Lt. Col. Stanley Polk, Patrick Nixon, Raymond Miller, Jim Austin, William "Bill" Mackrain, Lt. Col. E. J. "Vince" Vincent, Clarence "Vic" Spradley, Wynn Hasty, Scott Simpson, Dan Sclater, and Maj. Don Greiman. *DeCA historical file*

functions, organizational relationships, authority, and administration. This was, in effect, the DeCA charter. It defined the agency's mission as providing "an efficient and effective worldwide system of commissaries for the resale of groceries and household supplies at the lowest practical price consistent with quality to members of the military services, their families, and other authorized persons, while maintaining high standards for quality, facilities, products, and service."

The agency also was to "provide a peacetime training environment for food supply logisticians in wartime and ... troop issue subsistence support to military dining facilities, consistent with service needs."

METHODS AND DECISIONS

From day one, the transition team had its work cut out for it. Members were to prune seventeen-hundred above-store-level positions, reduce four headquarters into one, and consolidate twenty-two regional operations into seven.

But the team also faced immediate problems of a much more personal nature. Many of the team's members had been summoned on short notice to leave their

homes and families to be a part of bringing the new agency to life. Dreska, fully aware of the sacrifices his team members were making, later acknowledged, "Many of you have had to make tough, personal decisions and sacrifices along the way." He knew very well indeed, since he had done the same.

Early in the process, after a lot of lively debate, the team set the initial goal of becoming "America's best-run grocery." This vision statement caused concern that the private sector would perceive DeCA's goal as a threat. The agency soon changed its vision statement to that of becoming "The Military's Most Valued Benefit," which seemed to be a better fit for all involved.

'MURDER BOARDS'

"Murder board" was a nasty-sounding term used half in jest by Flanagan. It referred to the process of proposing, debating, and eventually agreeing upon the structure and the numbers of people assigned to each headquarters office and directorate, as well as the region staffs. It was a disagreeable process to more than one participant, but the method was necessary and proved to be as equitable a system

as could be conceived.

The natural tendency was for the heads of the functional areas to load their respective directorates or staff offices with as many good people as possible to make the transition work. Unfortunately, that would contradict the very reason the agency was being created: to save money and manpower positions. The staffs had to be limited, leaving each office and directorate contesting for every billet they could find. It was the task of the murder boards to eliminate superfluous positions.

Flanagan ran these boards. Transition team members from each function provided a basic outline for the structure of each area. These "straw-man" organizations would then be challenged, justified, or rejected by a murder board of junior staffers. The functional representatives had to defend their turf and explain why each position was needed.

After each organization plan was whittled down, Flanagan put it through the same drill with representatives from each of the services. Flanagan later said, "Our purpose was to challenge the number of positions and projected functions advocated by the responsible team. We had a ceiling that governed our numbers, so each

space had to count.”

Any board members who had suffered cuts and losses to their organizations were usually more than willing to question the temporary structures of others. Still, the board members seemed to be thinking more of the organization as a whole rather than their own little corner of it.

The results were then presented to Dreska and the entire transition team. In a single eight-hour session, the entire draft organization was refined. Changes were made, and the final draft results were sent to the services for their comment. The heads of the military services

were briefed and, once the organization gained approval, it was locked in place through the procedure known as “transfer of function.” Already-existing individual positions were marked for transfer to DeCA, and were not opened to competitive staff-selection procedures.

This resulted in the reduction of seven-hundred spaces, all above store level, from the services’ commissary organizations. Personnel functions at each organization then found who was eligible for transfer to DeCA. They also tried to find new positions in other organizations for employees who would be out of a job once DeCA opened its doors.

THE ‘LONG POLE IN THE TENT’

The key to the consolidation of the services’ several automated business processes was a single system that would enable the agency to do business, keep track of inventory, and pay its bills on time. As Dreska liked to put it, this single system would be “the long pole in the tent,” without which the tent would collapse. An interim system, the DeCA Interim Business System (DIBS), would first be established, which would be instrumental in making the transition to the new Defense Commissary Information System (DCIS).



1990-1991: LAYING THE FOUNDATION. Colin McMillan, assistant secretary of defense for production and logistics, visits with Maj. Gen. John P. Dreska and Bill Mackrain at the transition team’s office. DeCA

photo: Ken Perrotte

It sounded simple enough, but it wasn’t. “From a systems standpoint, it was a much more horrendous task than met the eye,” Dreska said. The interim system wouldn’t be operational until well after the agency was activated, while the permanent system was destined to be even more challenging.

In August and September 1990, the commissary commanders held conferences with the transition team. The second of these was held at DLA headquarters at Cameron Station in Alexandria, Virginia, to clarify the draft DeCA headquarters operation and internal organization plan. Participants debated many issues pertaining to the new headquarters, particularly the manpower needed for each functional area, and bill-paying and accounting methodology. The latter would prove to be DeCA’s biggest problem after start-up.

SEARCHING FOR A SYSTEM

The transition team’s biggest difficulty did indeed turn out to be Dreska’s “long pole in the tent,” the merger of four separate and disparate business systems. There was no system that was easily exportable.

Patrick Nixon observed years later, “We couldn’t get the Marine Corps system, which most of us thought was the best, because it used proprietary software; and attempting to expand from what the size

of the Marine Corps was [thirteen stores] to over four hundred was simply too tall an order. Now, the Marine Corps system was a retail system. It wasn’t just the Marine Corps that used it. There were retailers who used it, and they all ran off a Sterling Software mainframe computer.

“But to expand it from its small size into the worldwide requirements for the new agency would have required a major procurement. There’s nothing that said you would have gotten the same quality product, and it would have taken years. So the thought was, let’s adapt something that we have, which was kind

of a conglomeration of what the Army was doing.” Attempting to convert all the existing resale agreements into a single system overnight proved impossible because there were no pricing or payment mechanisms in place.

“There were some really tough times,” Nixon later recalled, “but we got through it. It was an amazing undertaking, and just the politics and dynamics of watching it take place, and being part of that, were incredible.

“The retail world buys on purchase orders; they always have. They don’t buy on standing contracts and then match these to invoices. Every order is a purchase order, you pay on what you received, you pay the same day that you got it, and you match it to the penny. We had an inventory management system that managed our business processes. When it came to procurement, as the head of the Marine Corps commissary section, I was a contracting officer; I had contracting officer authority, so I didn’t have to have contacting officers on my staff; I was the contracting officer. I signed for the procurements. I classified jobs. I had to make sure that I didn’t go over my budget. It was as close to a retail-oriented operation that the military had.”

The Jones Commission had recognized this, and came to believe the Marine Corps

commissary branch's business system was probably the best model for DeCA. The DeCATT initially wondered whether DeCA was too large for that system, but it too eventually agreed that the Marine system seemed to be the "best fit." But the team found it couldn't obtain the same business system, and, even had the system been available, DeCA's sheer size precluded its obtaining the same level of retail-oriented autonomy and accountability that the Marine Corps stores had enjoyed in 1988.

After he was named chief of plans and operations, Nixon's role was to develop the agency's operating concept. This was called the "O and O" (standing for organization and operations) concept, on how the agency would run, how the regions would be set up, what their responsibilities would be, how they would interface with the stores, how decisions would be made, and how buying would be done.

CHOOSING THE HEADQUARTERS

While the transition team studied where the headquarters and the regions would be located, its members realized they had to keep all the services happy, while having the least possible impact on employees, in order to get their recommendations

approved. Then the agency needed to draw up a charter, draft its regulations, and obtain funding. It was an impressive undertaking, especially given for amount of time allocated.

In September 1990, the transition team recommended to Colin McMillan, the assistant secretary of defense for production and logistics, that the new agency headquarters be located at Fort Lee, Virginia. McMillan agreed, and soon announced Fort Lee as his selection. The choice was criticized in many quarters for many reasons: It was too far from (or too close to) Washington; the Richmond airport was a difficult and expensive airport from which to make connections, with few direct flights and a limited choice of airlines; and, though the cost of living (and therefore the federal salaries) in the Richmond area were far lower than in Washington or New York, they were higher than in San Antonio (the other obvious site choice, since it was home to AFCOMS).

But for Dreska, the objectives in choosing the locations for the headquarters of the agency and its regions were not only to save money and to make the change transparent to the customers, but also to mini-

mize inconvenience and avoid disrupting employees' lives. As many jobs as possible were to be saved and would be established at the various regional headquarters in places that already had a significant population of commissary personnel. These actions would directly address the morale problem by assuring employees of a job, and would keep government relocation expenses to a minimum.

There were other good reasons Fort Lee was chosen as the headquarters site: its proximity to Washington (normally, a drive of 135 to 160 minutes); the existence of a brand-new facility built by the Army Troop Support Agency (TSA) as its new headquarters; and since TSA was already located there, it had a large, built-in experienced employee population already in place. It was located adjacent to the interstate system and within a half-hour drive from Richmond International Airport, which, through small and often expensive, was more accessible than larger airports in bigger metropolitan areas, where traffic snarls were a daily occurrence.

The agency headquarters would be Fort Lee's Building 11200. The original headquarters organization included the command section and six major directorates: acquisition, facilities, information resource management, operations, personnel and manpower, and resource management. Special staff offices included equal opportunity; public affairs; strategic planning and analysis; safety, security, and administration; and a legislative liaison office, located at the Pentagon. Finally, there were a number of personal staff offices, including the inspector general, internal review, and general counsel. (*A complete list of the original directorate and office chiefs is available in the Appendices.*)

San Antonio would have been an excellent choice for a headquarters site, but it lacked a new building. The old facility had been plagued with continual computer problems and was too far from Washington. AFCOMS employees who didn't want to move east were able to find positions at one of five military installations in the San Antonio area. If the new agency had been placed in San Antonio, few TSA employees



NIXON, PARKES, McMILLAN. DeCA transition team members Patrick B. Nixon (left) and Rose Parkes meet Assistant Secretary of Defense (production and logistics) Colin P. McMillan (shaking hands) and his assistant, William Sharkey, during McMillan's visit to the team's office in Tyson's Corner, Virginia. DeCA photo: Ken Perrotte



DeCA HEADQUARTERS building, Fort Lee, Virginia. Although proximity to Washington also played a role, it was largely because this structure had been built that the new agency settled at Fort Lee rather than in San Antonio, Texas, or St. Louis, Missouri. DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt

at Fort Lee who did not wish to move would have been able to find DoD jobs, since there was only one post near Fort Lee. The only other location given serious consideration, St. Louis, Missouri, was centrally located and had good airline connections, but locating there would have meant renting office space, and the cost of moving people from both Texas and Virginia was prohibitive.

SELECTION OF REGION HEADQUARTERS AND DIRECTORS

As Dreska and the transition team set about establishing regional headquarters, they were acutely aware that employees of the different commissary systems were fiercely loyal to their service organizations. Their loyalties wouldn't go away overnight.

Many employees at AFCOMS, for example, feared that the organization would be biased toward the Army. It was in large measure to avoid hard feelings and bad morale that the old AFCOMS headquarters building at Kelly Air Force Base, Texas, was selected as the site for DeCA's

Midwest Region headquarters. Besides being politically astute, the choice was also logical from a fiscal standpoint because it obviated the need (and the cost) of moving whole groups of AFCOMS personnel. Most people who worked either at AFCOMS on Kelly, or at TSA's Midwest Commissary Region at nearby Fort Sam Houston, would move into the old AFCOMS headquarters building on the annex locally known as "East Kelly." Ultimately it also became home to the West Service Center.

Eventually, Dreska and the transition team settled on an organization that featured seven regions and two service centers. The regions were originally conceived as autonomous organizations under the DeCA umbrella, largely capable of making many of their own policies and decisions. This worked as planned for awhile (with the regions determining 80 percent of their own stock lists, for example). Eventually, many of their functions gravitated back to the headquarters in the form of an operations center and, later still, as various "business units."

Alleviating some of the discomfort among AFCOMS people resulting from the naming of Fort Lee as the headquarters location, Dreska announced on December 13, 1990, that Roy C. Speight, formerly deputy to the AFCOMS commander, would be the DeCA deputy director. This considerably eased the anxieties of those AFCOMS personnel who had feared the organization was going to be heavily "green" (Army) rather than "purple," with little prospect of their finding a position.

Ironically, after the announcement was made as to the location of the region headquarters (on September 25, 1990), and again when the deputy director, region directors, and directorate chiefs were named (in November and December 1990), some Army and Navy people began to feel that the Air Force was getting too big a piece of the pie. Years later, Dreska confirmed what had seemed apparent in 1991: An effort had been made to choose region directors from each of the services. This latter effort didn't initially work out with the Navy, because most of its key personnel

were staying with the Navy exchanges.

The original DeCA region directors and their regions were as follows: Cecil Saunders, formerly of the Marine commissaries and TSA, directed the Central Region at Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek, Virginia; Charles "Charlie" Wiker, from TSA, led the European Region at Ramstein Air Base, Germany; Air Force Col. Jim Scott, formerly of AFCOMS, led the Midwest Region at Kelly Air Force Base, Texas; Tony Collazo, formerly of AFCOMS, led the Northeast Region at Fort Meade, Maryland; Army Col. Ray Ansel led the Northwest/Pacific Region at Fort Lewis, Washington; John McGowan, formerly with AFCOMS, led the Southern Region at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama; and Patrick Nixon, formerly with the Marine Corps Commissary Branch, led the Southwest Region at Marine Corps Base El Toro, California.

After the leadership announcements, the transition team worked hard to get the agency ready in time for its scheduled opening in October 1991. Employees of the existing commissary agencies continued to do their jobs while simultaneously starting to assume their DeCA responsibilities. Comparatively few actually had to change their residence in order to accept their new positions.

SERVICE CENTERS AND HEADQUARTERS DIRECTORATES

The service centers would handle most of the agency's finances, particularly bill paying, on a regional basis. They were responsible for analysis and reconciliation of accounting transaction data between the inventory management system and the official accounting system. The centers provided funds management, including accounts receivable; debt management; accounts payable reconciliation of receipts and vendor invoices voucher preparation; and disbursement officer certification for payment of funds. They also provided central accounting for DeCA's coupon program, and input obligations for contracts and travel orders. The civilian payroll function, however, was handled by the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS).

The East Service Center, headed by Chet Boutelle, formerly of TSA, was located just outside Fort Lee, Virginia. It was responsible for all commissaries and regions east of the Mississippi River, including the European Region. The West Service Center, headed by Candido "Candi" Corrada, formerly of AFCOMS, was co-located with the Midwest Region headquarters at Kelly Air Force Base, Texas. It took care of all regions and commissaries west of the Mississippi, including all stores in the Pacific, Korea, and Japan.

Finally, there were a number of district offices that served much the same purpose as complexes—groups of stores, clustered together for ease of administration—and several central distribution centers (CDCs) that would take the place of store warehouses and make just-in-time delivery of merchandise a reality. The CDCs were to buy and stock grocery items (especially perishables and semi-perishables) not available to stores through frequent or direct store-delivery methods, and deliver them to the stores as needed, even on a same-day basis.

One unique part of the reorganization was the move of the AFCOMS engineering directorate from Kelly Air Force Base, Texas, to Lackland Air Force Base, just a few miles away. It occupied the offices previously occupied by the AFCOMS Central Region. There it became the design and

construction division of the DeCA facilities directorate, nominally under the command of Army Col. Ed Morel at DeCA headquarters but, for all intents and purposes, it was autonomous and under the direction of Walt Winters, an Air Force Reserve brigadier general and formerly the chief of AFCOMS engineers.

Dreska later said that there was some effort to give each of the services some representation, both with respect to locations and to the region directorships. The process assured that the jobs and the sites for the region headquarters were evenly and judiciously distributed, a necessary exercise in a delicate situation, ruffling as few feathers (and moving as few people) as possible.

EXPERIMENTATION WITH DISTRIBUTION METHODS

Another major area of study was that of distribution. Scott Simpson had worked for TSA from 1979 to 1987 before moving to San Diego to become one of NAVRESSO's first civilian store directors. In 1989 he volunteered for the transition team, where he was named chief of distribution and was tasked to determine whether the Navy's central distribution center system could be adapted for use by all the services. At the time, the services addressed distribution differently. The Navy and the Marine Corps used central distribution, with their own dis-



DeCA's MIDWEST Region headquarters in San Antonio, Texas, was established in the old AFCOMS headquarters, Thompson Hall, on Kelly Air Force Base's east annex. *DeCA Midwest Region*

tribution centers. Those services also started frequent delivery service (FDS) in San Diego. Meanwhile, the Army and the Air Force began experimenting with frequent delivery. Most of their locations had contiguous warehouses connected to the stores.

Dreska needed someone to head up a study on how the existing CDCs could be adapted to serve the stores belonging to the other services. Since Simpson had control of the San Diego CDC, he volunteered to take on the test assignment. The challenge: Could DeCA put different business systems and different ordering systems on its own ordering system, process an order to a CDC, and then get same-day delivery? "We accomplished that in about six to eight weeks," Simpson says today. "Really, we amazed ourselves."

Simpson added George Air Force Base and Fort Irwin, both in California, to the San Diego CDC's responsibilities. "We put together the test, we trained people on how to order, and we did it. We actually had the people at George and Fort Irwin ordering, and we were delivering the same day out of San Diego. They were getting the product, and we facilitated the billing. It worked."

Today, Simpson believes the distribution test was a significant success for the transition team. "General Dreska was very happy about that, but it was not very well-received by the Army and Air Force. The Navy and Marines had been using it effectively for years. So what we proved was, 'Everybody could be doing this,' and we had the facilities to do it.

"Subsequently, a year later, when we actually became DeCA, we started putting everybody under those distribution centers. A few years later, DeCA decided to use frequent delivery service instead. But CDCs were very effective during the times that we had them."

TOURING EXISTING FACILITIES

Meanwhile, several teams of individuals went out into the field to conduct on-site inspections of existing facilities, to see which facilities needed the most urgent attention, which were beyond salvage, and which were modern enough to stay in

business with no major modification.

But it went further than that. Margaret F. "Peggy" Young, a member of the Jones Commission and a logical choice for the Navy to nominate to the transition team, remembered that another objective of these visits was to find out "how we were doing business, to see the four services' operating systems actually in operation, and try to determine what facets of each could be integrated into DeCA's business system."

IN THE MIDDLE OF IT ALL

The transition team members who were not placed in leadership roles had a unique perspective. They were a part of the team for change, but they were not in positions where they had any real control over the course of events. They were, in effect, go-betweens, trying to do what was best for the new agency while trying to keep the team leaders conscious of the concerns of their fellow workers still at the service



agencies. They were fortunate in that they had a receptive audience with Dreska, Flanagan, and most of the team leaders.

Every member of the transition team had his or her own ideas as to what should have been done differently, but there were several areas in which many of them concurred: good leadership, more time needed for the transition, and effects on morale.

Two typical team members were Vic Spradley, the chief of AFCONS' manpower

division, and Marvin Beck, the deputy director of TSA's engineering and materiel directorate. Spradley's job was to help set up the organizational structure for the new organization. Beck performed similar tasks for the new facilities directorate. Both were concerned with determining how many people were needed, and what their roles and responsibilities would be. As Spradley said, "I spent most of my time drawing [organizational] charts and working mis-

sion and function statements." It wasn't exciting work, but a lot of tasks of a similar nature had to be done before the organization could stand up on its own.

Neither believed the team was given enough time to properly transition to the new organization. Spradley felt the process should have been phased over a much longer time period. Bill paying became a major problem because "we moved out with the conversion too quickly. The financial

1991: A YOUNG MOTHER has her three sons in line, and firmly in hand, as they head to the Naval Station Mayport store on a sunny Florida morning. NAVRESSO photo, DeCA historical file



Panama Stores **WELCOME BACK** Patrons After 'Just Cause'

WHEN U.S. FORCES overthrew Panamanian President Manuel Noriega in December 1989, it was only the latest chapter in the ongoing relationship between the United States and Panama, whose independence had been orchestrated by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1903 for the purpose of building an isthmian canal.

Noriega was the nationalistic, anti-American president of a country that had historically been friendly with the United States. Noriega had once enjoyed such a relationship, but his role as a major figure in international drug trafficking made him an embarrassment. After the United States indicted him *in absentia* for his drug activities, he became openly belligerent. In 1989, U.S. civilians, servicemen, military families, and Panamanians working for the United States were harassed and sometimes abused by the Panamanian Defense Forces (PDF) and the dangerous, vigilante-like "dignity squads." One U.S. military officer had actually been killed at a roadblock. Such incidents, as well as Noriega's *macho* declaration of war upon the United States, probably made military intervention inevitable.

Panama's relations with the United States, while friendly overall, had often been strained before Noriega was president. Even before the canal was first opened to shipping in 1914, Panama became displeased with the terms of the original treaty granting the U.S. sovereignty over the Canal Zone, the rights to own, protect, and operate the canal, and to collect tolls from every vessel passing through. Several agreements gave Panama progressively better terms, primarily by raising the rent on the Canal Zone, employing large numbers of Panamanians on U.S. military bases, and training many others to operate the canal. However, as Panamanian nationalism grew, friction and bad relations between the locals and American "Zonies" erupted into violence over seemingly trivial issues, such as where the national flags were to be flown.

The Carter-Torrejos treaty, signed in 1977, alleviated tensions by setting a timetable for the canal to be turned over to Panama in 1999. Because the treaty stipulated a gradual reduction of the U.S. military presence, Fort Gulick was turned over to Panama and renamed Fort Espinar* in 1984. The post's housing and community services remained in American hands, so the commissary stayed open until August 1995.

Despite Noriega's policies, most Panamanians remained friendly toward the United States. This was especially true of those who were employed by either the Panama Canal Commission (PCC) or the military. Many Panamanians had positions with the three commissaries (at Corozal, Howard Air Force Base, and Fort Espinar), which paid wages enabling their employees to enjoy a higher standard of living than would have been possible with most jobs on the local economy.

On December 19, 1989, TV reports and increased activity of American troops had made it obvious to Robert Varela, acting director of the Troop Support Agency's Panama District, that "something big was brewing," so he asked Sgt 1st Class Javier Ambler, district NCO in charge, and Sgt 1st Class Victor Martínez, Corozal deputy commissary



LADIES IN TRADITIONAL Panamanian dress, and a "welcome back" sale, greeted troops and returning families at the Corozal commissary, as well as the stores at Howard Air Force Base and Fort Gulick/Espinar. TSA photo, DeCA historical file

officer, to report to the commissary with their weapons. At about 11:30 that night, armored personnel carriers rumbled past the Corozal commissary, heading for Panama City. Soon a firefight broke out, and tracers and machine gun rounds flew directly over the commissary parking lot. Mortar shells detonated close to the commissary, and the building shook from the concussions. The U.S. military's Southern Command (Southcom) network warned there was a severe threat to the lives of all personnel, and prohibited all movement. Operation Just Cause was underway.

Although it was the middle of the night, troops soon arrived at the commissary, requesting emergency supplies and soft drinks. For the next seventy-two hours, Varela, Ambler, Martínez, and the troop subsistence officer, Capt. Webster Fisher, along with troop issue soldiers assigned to the warehouse, supported the operation. Much of the work was done under cover of darkness. For example, when a delivery arrived at Corozal from Howard Air Force Base at midnight on December 21, armed TSA personnel had accompanied the trucks and secured the warehouse perimeter.

On December 22, though the fighting continued, Southcom asked the commissaries to open for business, since many military families had not anticipated the invasion and were now without food and water. The stores did open, but chaotic conditions prevented many employees from reporting to their jobs; of 221 employees, only 60 actually reached their place of work. Many of them went without sleep for many hours, helping to supply troops and families with needed groceries. Responding to the personnel shortage, volunteers from the community helped stock shelves and run registers.

Seldom, if ever, have military and civilian commissary personnel alike been in such danger while on duty, or while trying to reach their duty station. Luis Molina, deputy CSO at Howard, donned a helmet and flak jacket and, under Air Force escort, crossed the high-level Bridge of the Americas to get supplies for Howard from the CDC

* — Named for Jose Domingo Espinar, a Panamanian general who was instrumental in the liberation of Colombia (which included Panama) from Spain in 1821.

Warehouse at Corozal. Robert Gray, the acting CSO at Fort Espinar, donned full battle gear and helped secure the post's perimeter. Travel by auto was very dangerous, so some employees walked as far as fifteen miles to work. One who did so, Herbert John, Fort Espinar's grocery manager, found himself in the midst of heavy fighting in Colon before he was able to slip away unscathed. Such dedication by civilian personnel who risked life and limb to do their jobs was truly remarkable.

Not everyone escaped unharmed. Tragically, CDC warehouse worker Oscar Bennett was killed during heavy fighting at the PDF headquarters, close to his home. Miguel Niento, Corozal's produce manager, unfortunately had the same name as a high-ranking member of Noriega's military, and as a result was detained by American forces until freed by the efforts of Corozal's Ambler. At gunpoint, PDF soldiers commandeered the automobile of CDC warehouse supply clerk Celia Cockburn, but allowed her and her passenger, Alice Greenridge, to go free. Corozal's Delmore Chandler, a supervisory store checker, dodged roadblocks, gunfire, and roving bands of "dignity battalion" thugs to transport employees between their homes and the store.

Supply and logistical problems were overcome, thanks to the efforts of many. Throughout the crisis, Col. Charles Lalli, TSA's Western Commissary Region (WCOR) commander, kept in contact with Varela and the stores, trying to ensure everyone's safety. Brig. Gen. Charles St. Arnaud, TSA commander, helped Lalli and Gloria Ellis, WCOR's chief of logistics management, develop a plan to support the stores by airlift and by expediting sea shipments. This was crucial, since fourteen containers of subsistence intended for the commissaries had been detained and looted. For a while, all port operations and canal traffic ceased, and the only supplies getting into Panama were those flown into Howard Air Force Base. Several airlifts brought in high-demand items such as baby food, formula, diapers, toilet paper, paper plates and cups, soups, juices, canned meats, canned tuna, and detergents. Dairy products were a problem because of their limited shelf life, but after the initial delays, things began moving normally. Key to all these efforts were the TSA Liaison Office in Washington, the Defense Subsistence Office (Cheat-

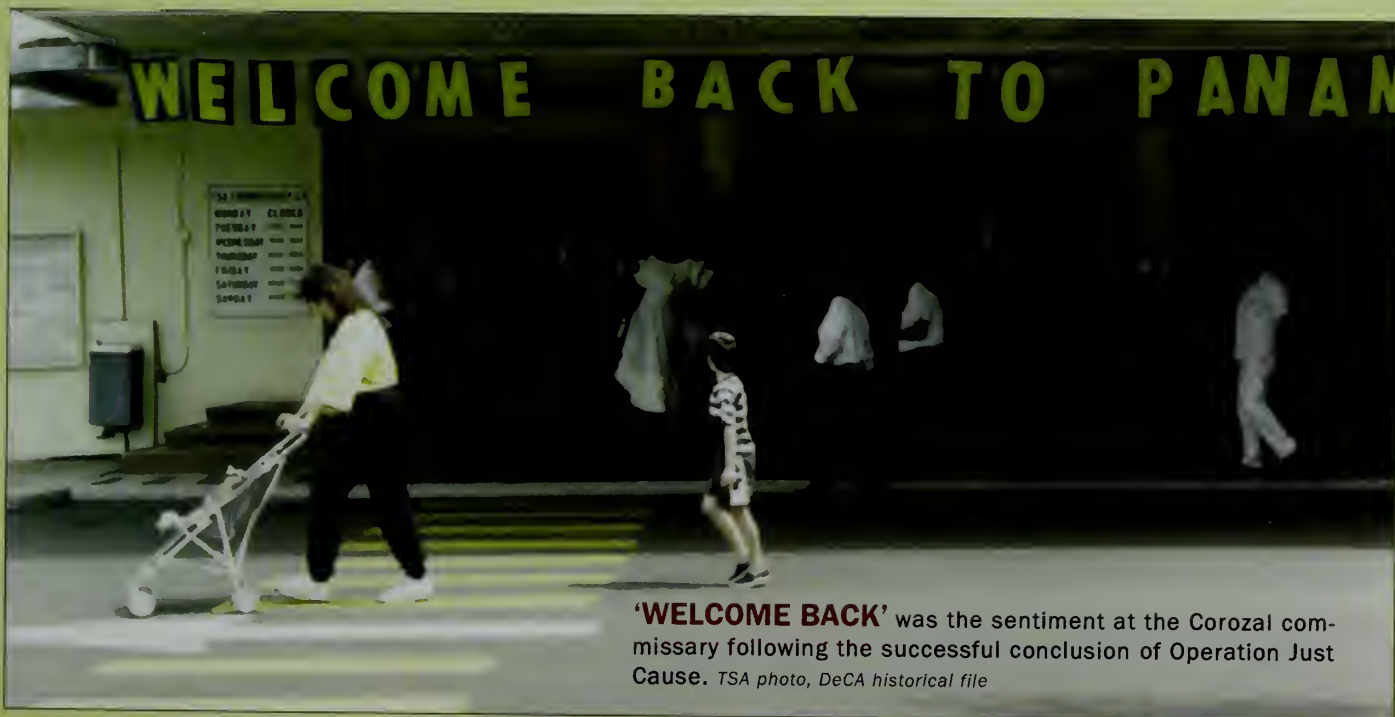


U.S. ARMY personnel patrol the streets of Panama City following Operation Just Cause. *U.S. Army photo*

ham Annex) in Williamsburg, Virginia, and the Air Force. Thomas and Howard distributors, along with Don Boals and James Brown of the Fort Jackson, South Carolina, commissary, had arranged shipment of the baby food.

When the fighting ended, Noriega was tried, convicted, and imprisoned in the United States for drug trafficking. Panamanians working for the United States were overjoyed to greet families that had been evacuated and were now returning. The commissaries held "Welcome Back" and "Celebrate America" sales events, for which employees decorated the stores, wore traditional costumes, and performed traditional dances. The festivities enabled them to express their delight at being rid of Noriega, having their democracy back, and having their livelihoods secured for another decade.

— Portions of this feature were taken from "Operation Just Cause" in *TSA Today*, Winter/Spring 1990, written by Ronald J. Kelly, editor, with input from TSA's Robert Varela, Gilberto Dacosta, and Gloria Ellis.



'WELCOME BACK' was the sentiment at the Corozal commissary following the successful conclusion of Operation Just Cause. *TSA photo, DeCA historical file*

systems just couldn't keep up. Industry had problems dealing with the new system, too."

Beck agreed, elaborating, "The problems encountered in the first year were almost directly attributable to not having the time to analyze and think through the potential problems that would surface. It hurt the transition process. The problems

we experienced with bill paying were directly linked to not having the time and folks to really think through that whole process. Coordination with the respective commissary services could have been much better if more time was available."

Beck pointed out two other limiting factors. The first was funding, both in the short- and in the long-run. "To start with, funding for start-up was grossly miscalculated. In the longer run, I think the hidden costs that the consolidation revealed really surprised a lot of folks in Congress and DoD." The true costs of operating the commissaries had long been obscured by the budgets of the respective services; now as a DoD agency, those costs were recognizable as items in the DoD budget.

The other limiting factor was an arbitrary, artificial standard that limited the team's options. "The Jones Commission report was a report, but it became first a guideline and then dogma," Beck believed. "For instance, the size of the proposed headquarters stated in the report became a fixed number, and we couldn't exceed that number in structuring the new headquarters."

On a positive note, Spradley recalled, "One of the team's greatest strengths was that General Dreska and Colonel Flanagan were always willing to listen to anyone's ideas. Communications flowed in both

directions. Dreska was the right man for the job to get us started. Flanagan knew what the general wanted, and how to push us to get it done."

Beck agreed: "The two worked extremely well together. Their leadership was excellent. Colonel Flanagan provided the energy to the team through his work ethic. It was a real pleasure working for both of them."

Beck saw the transition team's teamwork and commitment as their biggest asset. "Everyone was committed and dedicated to the task at hand. Some of the individuals selected for key management and leadership positions really rose to the occasion. Outside the team, Generals Swarts and St. Arnaud were effective leaders during the whole process. They asked tough questions, but they were very supportive."

Not surprisingly, Beck didn't notice any morale problems at TSA, especially after the site selection had been made. His own separation from his family was limited; he would make the two-hour-plus drive home to the Fort Lee area every Friday, and then drive back to Tyson's Corner every Sunday. Spradley, on the other hand, couldn't go home to Texas on the weekends, and experienced some personal hardship. "The separation from my family was bad, and the fact that it was my daughter's senior year in high school didn't help." Morale at AFCOMS had initially been good, "but when it became evident that Fort Lee would be DeCA's home, morale really started to go down." It was a logical reaction; everyone in San Antonio feared for their



TV SPOTS. Maj. Gen. John P. Dreska participated in several videotaping sessions at the Pentagon to record messages intended for commissary personnel of all services. *DeCA historical file*



A BLANK PIECE OF PAPER.

Key DeCA personnel share a laugh before getting down to work. From left: Maj. Gen. John P. Dreska; Col. William Flanagan; Gary Lutz; Col. Terry Fowler; Rose Parkes and Cmdr. Mark Weston (obscured); William Sharkey, assistant to McMillan; and Assistant Secretary of Defense (production & logistics) Colin McMillan.

DeCA photo: Ken Perrotte

livelihood, and most did not want to uproot their family or leave Texas. But, as Spradley said, "Once the decision on location was made, there was no avoiding it: someone was going to have to move; someone was going to have to lose out."

When the move was made to Fort Lee, transition team members were placed alongside Troop Support Agency personnel at TSA headquarters in Weatherly Hall. Additional personnel began to come in from the services. Dreska later recollected that as the team grew larger, it was also less close-knit. It was no longer as enthusiastic, and perhaps not as dedicated, as the original team. It was unfortunate, but inevitable; the new members of the ever-growing team had not been part of the original planning and decision-making, and it would take them a while to accept "the DeCA way" of doing things.

'A FAST-MOVING TRAIN'

Until events could stabilize, many people at AFCOMS, Marine Corps commissaries, NAVRESSO, and TSA were disconcerted by the whole process. As they saw it, the pace was simply too fast. To much of the commissary workforce, the swift pace portended rapid changes and, just possibly, rapid job losses.

No one had really expected the new agency to be formed so quickly. Even AFCOMS' Maj. Gen. Robert F. Swarts had said, as late as the spring of 1990, that he thought the transition wouldn't happen for "two or three years," which seemed a reasonable amount of time needed to pull off a merger of such proportions.

The announcement that the new agency was expected to be up and running by October 1991 caused concern and consternation, especially among those employees who were expected to assume new positions. The compressed schedule meant their jobs and lives were going to change far more quickly than they had imagined; and the short timetable, more than any other factor, would lead to the embarrassing bill-paying problems that plagued the agency during its first months of operation. There was not adequate time for proper training or for shaking the "bugs"



LT. COL. E. J. "VINCE" VINCENT and Vic Spradley at the transition team's Tyson's Corner office. Vincent had been the deputy director of the Jones Commission Study and played an important role with the DeCA transition team. Spradley filled several roles, primarily as a personnel and organization specialist. DeCA photo: Ken Perrotte

out of the business system.

Many advocates of the new agency referred to this process as a "fast-moving train." Others, unconvinced, not only believed the short timetable drastically reduced the new agency's chances for success, they also expressed private misgivings that the agency was being "intentionally set up to fail." Anonymous posters began to appear in hallways and restrooms at the various agencies; one of the most memorable was a pointed twist on the "fast-moving train" theme: a drawing of a train, headlight glaring, coming directly at the viewer, who was squarely in its path. The drawing was captioned, "The Light at the End of the Tunnel," and the locomotive was labeled "DeCA."

In retrospect, it's apparent that some of the employee paranoia and defeatism was the result of many years of reorganizations, hostile studies, attacks, and proposals for privatization.

There were many lessons to be learned from the transition. One of the most important was that a lot of trouble might have been avoided had a more realistic timetable, with realistic expectations, been given to Dreska and his charges. As Spradley noted, "We developed a fairly

good organizational concept, but were not given enough time to transition to the new organization. It should have been phased over a much longer time period. That way we could have tested some of the new concepts, found the problems and solutions, made necessary changes, and moved on to the next phase."

Only later, after the new agency was up and running, would Assistant Secretary of Defense Colin McMillan allude to the short time frame, noting that the private sector would never have attempted to merge four corporations into one so quickly. The irony of McMillan's remark was not lost on DeCA employees, who also recognized that people in the government often talk about being more businesslike, using the private sector's tried-and-true best practices, while failing to heed their own words.

In October 1990, a full fifty-one weeks before DeCA would become operational, the Air Force Commissary Service board of directors held its final meeting. Discussions centered on AFCOMS' transition into DeCA, a recap of AFCOMS' construction of new commissary facilities since 1976, and its support of Operation Desert Shield. Maj. Gen. Joseph A. "Bud" Ahearn, chairman of the board, who had already

'WE WERE IN FEAR FOR OUR LIVES'

IN 1991, CONSOLIDATION was the least of worries for commissary personnel in the Republic of the Philippines. They were far more concerned with a typhoon and a volcanic eruption that caused several deaths, did tremendous damage, and forced large-scale evacuations and base closures.

The United States military had been in the Philippines since the Spanish-American War in 1898 (*see Chapter 5*). The services established numerous commissaries throughout the islands. The first of these, at Manila, was the first overseas U.S. commissary.

Many Filipinos resented the American presence, but the Japanese conquest and occupation of the islands in 1941-1944, as well as their savage treatment of the Filipino people, helped improve and solidify Filipino-American relations. In 1946 the Philippines became independent, and relations remained good enough for American bases to stay in the islands. But by 1990, the relationship was again becoming strained. Negotiations to extend the bases' leases were proving difficult.

Then, after six hundred years of lying dormant, Mount Pinatubo, a volcano near Clark Air Base on the main island of Luzon, erupted and produced a major ashfall. Three days later, Typhoon Yunya struck amidst another eruption. The resulting damage was catastrophic. Reassessing the political situation and the expense of rebuilding the ruined facilities, the United States chose to close the bases and leave.

The three commissaries remaining in the islands would close. The Air Force Commissary Service (AFCOMS) had opened a new store at **Clark Air Base** in 1984 which, at the time, was the Air Force's largest overseas store, with sixteen registers doing a heavy-volume business. Bobby Peters was the commissary officer. The Naval Base at **Subic Bay** also had a big store, which opened in 1981. It had a large stock list and twelve check-outs. Its commissary officer was a master chief named Sullivan, who reported to Cmdr. David Maddon, who ran the exchange. The Naval Communications Station at **San Miguel** included a housing area, and morale, welfare, and recreation activities, and a small two-register commissary that was a branch of the Subic Bay store. Chief Warrant Officer Second Class Alex Ambrosio was in charge of the San Miguel Commissary. The San Miguel and Subic Bay stores were run by the Navy Resale Services and Supply Office (NAVRESSO).

The volcano started rumbling in January 1991. As months passed, underground tremors, clouds of smoke, and the scent of sulfur became commonplace, then intensified. On June 9, volcanologists predicted an eruption was imminent, and projected that Clark was directly in the path of either a major ashfall or a deadly pyroclastic flow. Clark evacuated the next morning; housing for the evacuees was arranged at Subic Bay. Evacuees like Dale Bauer, the Clark commissary's security officer, tried to make the best of things at Subic; on June 11, his family even went boating on the bay.

On June 12, the Philippines' traditional Independence Day, Bauer and his son were playing golf on the Subic course when they looked up and saw "a huge ash cloud" forming over the mountain. The volcanologists had been correct; this was the first eruption. Years later, Bauer related, "My son got agitated and asked what we should do. I said, 'We'd better tee off and play on!' It sounds crazy now, but I didn't think the cloud was going to affect Subic Bay." Meanwhile, a crowd formed in the parking lot between the Subic Bay commissary and exchange to



1991: A SPECTACULAR VIEW of the ash cloud formed by the major eruption of Mount Pinatubo on June 12. It was this ash cloud that awed spectators on Subic Bay's golf course and in its commissary parking lot, fifty miles away. Photo courtesy www.deville.com

watch the spectacular natural fireworks. Although they were fifty miles away, ash fell on them like a light snowfall. As it turned out, Bauer had been right; Subic only got a light dusting. But San Miguel got more, and Clark really got hit—again, just as the volcanologists had predicted.

Many uniformed personnel had stayed behind at Clark after the civilians were evacuated. One was AFCOMS Tech Sgt. John Hartling. When the eruption came, he was in the Clark store, "about twenty feet in the air on an aisle selector. Suddenly there was a tremendous roar ... the lights went off and I was up in the air, in the dark, with sirens wailing ... when emergency lights came on I lowered myself to the ground and ran. I didn't have time to be scared, but I wasn't calm!"

Things quieted down for two days. During this lull, Bobby Peters began thinking about the strain the evacuees were putting on the Subic commissary. Knowing there was still plenty of usable food at the Clark store, he obtained a forty-foot truck, and, with a Filipino volunteer to assist him, set off on June 15 to salvage whatever they could out of the abandoned Clark store. They were halfway there when the mountain blew again. By that time, the typhoon was approaching, and its advance winds blew the ash away from Clark and toward Subic Bay, so Peters continued onward. The two men spent three hours getting non-perishable items out of the store.

Back at Subic, the sky darkened as the ash cloud approached. Then the typhoon arrived, making conditions far worse. Rain fell as a mixture

of water and volcanic ash. By the time Peters and his helper returned from Clark, Subic was covered with wet ash, and its electricity and water were off. Soon the ground shook with earthquakes, while the wind and rain became torrential.

The wet volcanic ash became heavy and cement-like. It knocked down trees, collapsed roofs, made roads and runways impassible, destroyed bridges, and wrecked vehicles and aircraft. Jack McGregor, a NAVRESSO employee at Subic Bay, later recalled, "Day became night ... It really became a mess. ... It continued the rest of the day, evening, and night. We heard tree limbs crashing from the weight of the ash. We were afraid our quarters wouldn't hold the weight on the roof. ... We kept getting lightning bursts and we were able to catch quick glimpses of the devastation. ... The power at my quarters stayed off for a month."

Dale Bauer remembered, "It was pitch black, and hundreds of earthquake tremors really shook us up. There were some very anxious moments. ... We had no running water, no electricity, and no air conditioner. It was very hot, and we could hear the sounds of destruction all around us ... there were loud explosions from transformers shorting out ... we were in fear for our lives."

For weeks, Pinatubo intermittently shot pumice and volcanic ash thousands of feet into the sky, and it rained down upon the countryside. Sometimes clouds of ash obscured the sun; one witness said "obliterated" was a better description. Nearly half of Subic's buildings, especially the ones with flat roofs, eventually caved in from the weight of the wet ash. A gym roof collapsed and killed two girls, adding inconsolable grief to the nightmare. To prevent further tragedy, volunteer work crews shoveled the stuff off the rooftops. Meanwhile, the base supplied MREs (Meals Ready to Eat), and people formed lines wherever there were water wells.

After a few days, Bobby Peters again returned to Clark, as did John Hartling and dozens of others. They couldn't recognize anything. There was near-total devastation, and all the landmarks were buried or collapsed. "It was like landing on Mars," Hartling recalled. Once they located the commissary, they discovered that the terrible odor of rotting food pervaded everything. Walls were down, the warehouse roof had caved in, and the store was a dangerous, stinking mess. Equipment and furniture had been turned topsy-turvy by a river of mud and ash.

Dangerous mud flows known as *lahars* got into everything, wiping out vehicles, roads, bridges, and buildings.

Every day for a week, Hartling went to the commissary to drag out food for the dining hall. "We crawled under and over debris ... the sales floor was under dirty, smelly water. ... We groped around, finding cans and jars ... as long as the seal was intact, the items inside were good."

The U.S. military soon began moving American civilians out of Clark and San Miguel. Those needing medical attention went by air out of Subic; others boarded ships at Subic and sailed to the Mactan Airfield. Many

people, already exhausted, became seasick. At Mactan, things didn't improve much. The place "stunk like a latrine" with overburdened sewage and septic systems. From there, everyone was flown to Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, where, Bobby Peters later recalled, "For the first time in a very long time we were able to shower!"

From Guam, the people of Clark and San Miguel scattered to the four winds. The Clark store never reopened. The recovery team shipped out what they could and sold the rest to military retirees in the area. The store officially closed on July 31, 1991, but it had really gone out of business June 10, the day of the evacuation. A few mementos were recovered, including two award plaques. One was brought back by Steve Rossetti, assistant to longtime congressional staffer Williston Cofer, who in turn presented it to Maj. Gen. John P. Dreska, head of the DeCA transition team. Today, both are on display in the DeCA headquarters building. At San Miguel, the commissary's back wall had been knocked down into the rear storage area. Most of the goods were saved and sent to Subic Bay, and most of the equipment was salvaged. The store never reopened for business and was officially closed on November 14, 1991.

It took three months to clean up Subic. The commissary lost several of its warehouse walls during earthquakes following the eruption. It reopened, and stayed open until September 13, 1992. Then, all three bases and all three stores—what was left of them, at least—became the property of the Philippine government.



DALE BAUER, intrepid golfer and security officer for the Clark Air Base commissary. This photo was taken several years later, when he worked for DeCA.

DeCA historical file, courtesy Dale Bauer



THE COMMISSARY WAREHOUSE at Subic Bay collapsed under the weight of volcanic ash that had been thoroughly soaked by Typhoon Yunya. *DeCA historical file, courtesy Eddie Frederick, facilities directorate*

made his objections to the new agency known, commended AFCOMS on fourteen years of leadership and its positive impact on “the performance of our warriors.” He also urged personnel moving on to DeCA to strive for quality service.

The signal from Ahearn was clear: The Air Force had officially bought into the new organization, or at least accepted its inevitability, and was ready to fully cooperate in its evolution. It expected its people to do the same.

In the final analysis, the transition team had managed to sell DeCA to a highly skeptical work force. It had tried to assure everyone that they would all still have either a job or a retirement buyout. Most of the big personnel cuts were going to take place at the various commissary services’ regions and headquarters, where many of the employees were older civilians who had settled in a particular area. Although they had all signed mobility agreements, most of them simply didn’t want to uproot their families and move. Ultimately, 472 employees, worldwide, declined to transfer, but all but twelve either retired or accepted new civil service positions elsewhere.

MEANWHILE ... AND ELSEWHERE

As the transition team continued its preparations to stand up the new agency, the existing commissary systems kept working, trying to function as if it were business as usual. Certainly, there was plenty to keep commissary employees busy.

The beginning of the end for the Soviet Union prompted the near-immediate closure of some U.S. bases in Europe. Along with those bases, of course, went the commissaries that had served their communities for decades. Natural disasters brought about the sudden closure of more bases and stores in the Philippines. Commissary personnel helped support Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm while their colleagues enabled the existing store systems to keep functioning with no perceptible drop in service. Conditions in Panama resulted in temporary changes in service at that nation’s American bases and commissaries.

PANAMA: A SMALL TASTE OF THINGS TO COME

On Christmas Eve 1989, U.S. forces invaded Panama to oust President Manuel Noriega, who had been indicted by U.S. courts for illegal drug trafficking and had been an anti-American dictator in a nation that still had plenty of ties with the United States—ties that included the canal, which the United States still ran, and several military bases in the old Canal Zone.

Named Operation Just Cause, the invasion was staged primarily from stateside Army bases at Fort Bragg, Fort Lewis, Fort Hood, and Fort Riley, as well as installations in Panama. Although the Air Force and Navy were heavily involved in the operation, the preponderance of “boots on the ground” belonged to the Army.

The Army Troop Support Agency already ran three commissaries that remained in Panama—the stores at Corozal, Howard Air Force Base, and Fort Gulick/Espinar—which would soon find themselves with numerous new and unexpected customers. Meanwhile, all subsistence, troop issue and troop feeding were carried out through Army channels.

When the fighting stopped and the military had arrested and deported Noriega, the commissaries held concurrent “Welcome Back” and “Celebrate America” sales. The stores were decorated and, as

part of the general festivities, some of the local national employees wore traditional Panamanian dresses and performed traditional dances to entertain the shoppers. The “Welcome Back” signs were aimed at those families who had been spirited out of the country before the operation began. Customers also included families who had remained in place and had been there all along, as well as troops who had been sent in specifically for the hostilities. They were all enthusiastically greeted at the commissaries by their pro-American Panamanian commissary staffs.

A number of Panamanian employees later said that in their minds, the “Welcome Back” signs addressed the return of the United States in force, rather than any particular families who had actually left. The whole celebratory atmosphere was their expression of delight at being rid of Noriega, a sentiment that seemed to be shared by most Panamanians.

CRISIS IN THE GULF

On August 2-3, 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait, throwing the Middle East into an uproar and threatening to cause a major war. Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, pressed for money and heavily in debt to the Kuwaitis—who refused to forgive debts he had accrued while waging an eight-year war against Iran—had found it

1991: BASE CAMP. During Operation Desert Storm, soldiers from the 118th Military Police Company fill sandbags at the XVIII Airborne Corps Main Command Post, Rafha Airport, Northern Province, Saudi Arabia, on February 5.

Photo: Army Spc. Randall R. Anderson,
XVIII Airborne Corps History Office.





1990: PERSIAN GULF DUTY. LEFT PHOTO: Air Force Staff Sgt. Tom Miller stacks subsistence and Meals Ready to Eat (MREs) in a warehouse in the Saudi desert during Operation Desert Shield. BOTTOM PHOTO: Air Force Senior Master Sgts. Richard Wood and Mike Yaksich from the Air Force Commissary Service stand guard over MREs. Yaksich wears the green "European" camouflage battle-dress uniform, while Wood was among the first to get the Desert BDU. Note in both photos the continuing use of the crescent symbol for foodstuffs. *AFCOMS photos, DeCA historical file*



easy to conquer the world's most oil-rich nation.

But Saddam had misjudged the reaction he would get from the rest of the world. The United Nations, including the Soviet Union, the United States, and most of the Arab world, condemned the invasion. Saddam promised to withdraw from Kuwait in several days, but that never happened. At that point, the United States decided to build a coalition of nations to take action in what is probably the most volatile region of the world, where oil, religion, ancient tribal rivalries, and nationalism all play important roles.

Iraq's action had united the Arab and Muslim world as few other things could; all suddenly had a common, dangerous, potential foe. Saddam had a history of mistreating his own people, and the long war he had waged against Iran had been both fruitless and horribly destructive. When a treaty finally ended it as a stalemate, he called it a victory.

COMMISSARY AGENCY ROLES IN THE GULF

U.S. troops almost immediately began deployment to Saudi Arabia and began Operation Desert Shield to guard against any further adventurism by Iraq. Although AFCOMS was already drawing down and anticipating its consolidation into DeCA, it had one more major role of its own to play. The rapid deployment of troops and equipment by aircraft led to an urgent need for rations to sustain the force. Since AFCOMS was still the supplier of Air Force subsistence, on August 9, 1990, the AFCOMS Emergency Operations Center (EOC) activated to coordinate the purchase and shipment of rations to Saudi Arabia.

The EOC maintained a twenty-four-hour vigil for constant support, readiness and response throughout the crisis. Its very existence was a classic example of a positive response to lessons learned, since the facility had been constructed partially

because of feedback following Operation Urgent Fury (the invasion of Grenada) in 1983. The EOC did not need to go into a heightened state of readiness since the means of providing subsistence support were already in place. Prepositioned rations within a few hours' flight of the crisis area and rations on cargo ships already at sea had made this state of readiness possible.

By August 30, AFCOMS had established a central distribution center at Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, for the delivery of rations to the field. It had deployed 134 personnel, and shipped over 20,000 cases of MREs and 2,000 tons of B-Rations to Saudi Arabia. Overseeing these operations was Air Force Maj. Clesson G. Allman, formerly the executive officer at AFCOMS headquarters.

Because of the rapidity and efficiency of the AFCOMS response, the rations not only supported Air Force personnel, but were also instrumental in initially sustaining Army, Marine, and Naval forces.

AFCOMS ultimately supplied \$10.7 million in rations to the Army, as well as subsistence assistance to Navy hospital facilities and Marine combat personnel.

Ultimately, AFCOMS deployed 171 personnel from stations around the world and shipped more than \$55.1 million worth of rations (nearly 14,000 short tons) into the theater of operations. The agency ran thirteen troop issue and support locations of its own, where a sixty-day food reserve was established for storage and continual distribution to combat units. AFCOMS also provided the food needed at twelve additional troop support locations run by third-country contract workers. More AFCOMS personnel supported operations from various locations in Europe.

Of the rations, \$37.9 million were sent by sealift, \$10.6 million by airlift, and another \$6.6 million in prepositioned rations. Because of religious beliefs in Saudi Arabia, limitations existed on exactly what sorts of food and other materials could be shipped. Some items that would not cause an upraised eyebrow in the United States were potentially injurious to U.S.-Saudi relations. Among these were pork and pork by-products, alcohol, political or non-Islamic religious materials, and items deemed by the Saudis to be pornographic (including well-known U.S. magazines.)

AFCOMS continued to ship goods out

of Langley Air Force Base, Virginia, throughout Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

However, AFCOMS was not acting alone. The Army's Troop Support Agency (TSA), the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA), the Defense Personnel Support Center (DPSC), and the services' exchange operations all played important roles in troop support and troop feeding throughout Desert Shield and, subsequently, Desert Storm. In addition, individual commissary stores from each of the services, but especially AFCOMS and TSA stores in Europe and the Mediterranean, chipped in by sending a variety of much-needed items. Initially there was a great emphasis on bottled water, but as desalinization facilities became available in the theater of operations, other items started to flow: soft drinks, sports drinks, chewing gum, and snacks, to name a few.

When Operation Desert Shield began, TSA was already operating two commissaries in-theater, located at Dhahran and Riyadh. Originally, TSA was going to increase those stores' operating hours to seven days, seven hours per day, but early on during Operation Desert Shield, both stores were declared off-limits for deployed troops, and the stores returned to six-day operations. The reasoning behind that decision is presently not a matter of record, but the cutback was probably due to concerns about security as well as the fear that the

stores would be overwhelmed by a large influx of new customers.

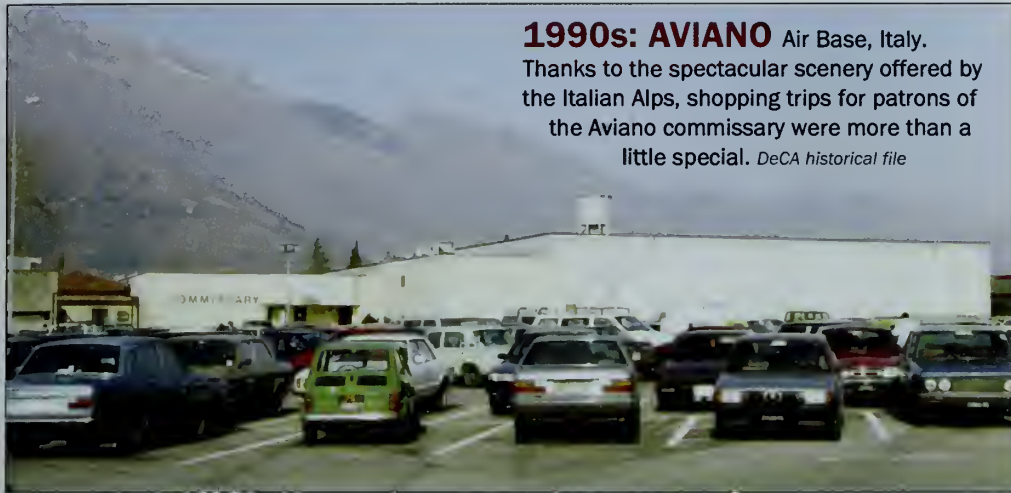
Both TSA and AFCOMS feared that the buildup and the war in the Gulf would wipe out their operations and management (O&M) funds as early as March 1991. This did not occur, thanks in large measure to the rapid victory.

AFCOMS provided the Army-Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) with 108 military personnel for running twenty tactical field exchanges (TFEs), and trained forty-five Army TFE managers in a single-day session at Fort Riley, Kansas. These personnel each took supervisory control of a TFE, with duties including shipment receiving, sales, accounting and inventory operations, and funds security. AAFES also had extensive non-subsistence operations in the Gulf, with 250,000 square feet of storage in one warehouse, and distributed hundreds of thousands of catalogues for hard goods. The Marine exchanges worked with AAFES to set up nine mobile exchanges. When business became brisk, those running the Marine exchanges noted the most popular items were Gatorade, sodas, chewing tobacco, chocolate, and the American flag.

The subsistence directorate of DPSC and the DLA played essential roles, shipping millions of tray rations and MREs, millions of pounds of meat and poultry, dairy products, sea foods, flour, bottles of water, and water purification tablets.



1990: STOCKTON, Rough and Ready Island, California. The store, pictured here at Naval Communications Station Stockton, was built in 1945 and extensively remodeled in 1977. Its front entrance used ramps for carts and wheelchairs and was covered by several staggered awnings. The Stockton commissary closed in 1998 due to a decision by the Navy to close the installation. NAVRESSO photo, DeCA historical file



1990s: AVIANO Air Base, Italy.
Thanks to the spectacular scenery offered by the Italian Alps, shopping trips for patrons of the Aviano commissary were more than a little special. DeCA historical file

What was one of history's longest supply pipelines had been quickly established and maintained. It was an impressive achievement by all involved. By the time the air war began on January 16, 1991, troops were no longer complaining that they could not get toothpaste, shampoo, or any food other than MREs. The commissaries, exchanges, DPSC and DLA had made significant contributions to maintaining the morale of coalition troops throughout the buildup and conflict, and had thus contributed immensely to the victory.

THE GULF WAR AND ITS AFTERMATH

As the United Nations' deadline for leaving Kuwait (midnight on January 15, 1991) approached, Saddam warned that if the West wanted war, he would unleash the "Mother of all battles." The Western allies believed that worldwide terrorist acts would likely occur if war took place.

Nonetheless, the coalition decided to call his bluff. On January 16, Operation Desert Shield gave way to Operation Desert Storm as the United States and its allies began military operations against Iraq. It started with an all-out, round-the-clock air assault on military targets in Iraq, aimed at destroying morale, defenses, communications, and supply lines—the infrastructure that is the classic target of all modern warfare.

After five weeks, on February 23, the allied offensive ground operations began. The coalition forces enjoyed enormous success, with few casualties. Just four days

later, President George H. W. Bush declared victory in the Gulf War. He announced a cease-fire, contingent upon Iraq's compliance with twelve United Nations resolutions.

Time would tell that Saddam Hussein would ignore those resolutions whenever possible. In 1998, he would expel the U.N. weapons inspectors, whose presence had been part of the cease-fire agreements. That, ultimately, would lead to yet another Gulf War, and the ousting of Saddam's regime.

THE COLD WAR ENDS

The catalyst that began the consolidation of the commissaries, as well as the entire military drawdown, was the ending of the Cold War.

The breakup of the Soviet Union brought about the end of the world with which all Americans had grown familiar. It had actually started in Czechoslovakia years before, in 1968, with a liberalization movement that was suppressed. It revived and grew with the success of Poland's Solidarity labor movement. It had spread with the Soviet disillusion over the misadventure in Afghanistan. Few in the West actually believed it would happen, but it turned out that the Soviet system had become a shell of its former self. It could no longer sustain the illusion of power, strength, and unity that had propped it up for forty years.

Few Americans were prepared for the news when on October 31, 1989, the Berlin Wall came down. It had existed since 1961; an entire generation had grown up know-

ing the wall was always there. The wall's demise portended changes not only for Germany but also for the Soviet Union, for Europe, and for the rest of the world. Within a year, on October 3, 1990, the reunification of East and West Germany became official.

But the world wasn't completely changed just yet, and the Soviets were not quite ready to relinquish their hold on Eastern Europe and the Baltic States. On January 13, 1991, Soviet soldiers seized key buildings in Vilnius, Lithuania, in a crackdown on liberal nationalists. Dozens of people were killed and injured. The Soviets felt free to act because the West was distracted by the crisis of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait the previous August. The Soviets were counting upon the West's unwillingness to interfere in Soviet politics, just as the USSR was being counted upon for its cooperation in the unfolding Gulf crisis.

Ultimately, the crisis in the Persian Gulf did not last long, and the Soviets, reacting to Western displeasure as well as their own internal divisions, were unable to cope with the Baltic situation. Lithuania declared independence—the first of the Soviet republics to do so—in March 1991, and the USSR recognized the independence of all three breakaway Baltic States (Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia) in September.

On December 21, 1991, two and a half months after DeCA's activation, the Soviet Union formally ceased to exist. While the monumental significance of this dissolution is obvious, one of the immediate long-term ramifications was that the U.S. military would soon begin to escalate its drawdown. Numerous cutbacks and base closures would follow.

To DeCA, that meant a rapid drop in the number of commissaries. The agency would begin with over four hundred stores; within ten years, nearly a third would be closed.

MOTHER NATURE SLAMS THE PHILIPPINES

Just a few months after the triumph in the Gulf War, U.S. forces in the Philippines confronted foes too overwhelming to vanquish. Mother Nature and an untenable

political situation sealed the bases' fate.

Politics and economic realities were the initial concerns. The leases for U.S. bases in the Philippine Republic were up for renewal, and the United States was negotiating regarding their future. Nationalist Philippine political sentiment had made the negotiations very difficult, with the Filipinos demanding high rents that the U.S. viewed as exorbitant.

That's when Mother Nature stepped in and ended all discussions. On June 10, after months of observing and measuring the increasing seismic activity of Mount Pinatubo, a volcano that had been dormant for six hundred years, officials at nearby Clark Air Base evacuated the installation. Two days later, the mountain exploded with a series of spectacular eruptions. Ash fall soon turned day into night, and ash accumulated on the ground like a dirty snowfall, making movement nearly impossible and breathing difficult.

Three days later, Typhoon Yunya slammed into the islands, adding high winds, terrifying lightning and thunder, torrential rains, flooding, mudslides, and ash flows to the devastation. Mixed with the rain, the ash became a heavy, cement-like substance that destroyed vegetation, buckled roofs, made roads and runways impassible, destroyed bridges, and wrecked vehicles and aircraft. Extensive damage quickly put Clark and Naval Communications Station San Miguel out of operation.

Naval Base Subic Bay, though badly damaged, functioned as a staging area for the evacuation of non-essential personnel. Later it served as the major point of embarkation for withdrawing all forces.

After reassessing the political situation, the projected rent payments, the shrinking need for those bases, and the tremendous expense involved in having to rebuild the damaged facilities, the United States decided it would not renew the leases. By the end of 1992, all U.S. forces had left the Philippines.

BACK IN THE STATES: OTHER COMMISSARY EVENTS

While these disasters were unfolding, DeCA continued to take shape, and the



1991: CLARK COMMISSARY, the Philippines. On June 12 Mount Pinatubo, a supposedly dormant volcano near Clark Air Base, began a series of eruptions that dumped millions of tons of ash on the base and the surrounding countryside. A mud and ash lahar poured into the commissary, inflicting massive damage. When it dried, it blocked the store's entrance and parking lot. DeCA historical file

services' four commissary agencies—for the time being—continued to improve their day-to-day operations.

In terms of organization, one of the more significant events had already taken place. On October 1, 1989, two years before DeCA would assume all commissary resale functions, the Army Food Service function was transferred from the Troop Support Agency to the U.S. Army Logistics Center. TSA went from supporting several key services for soldiers, including food service and laundry facilities, to being exclusively a commissary agency.

The same year, reflective of the way things had been changing since World War II, Army Col. Herbert Lloyd, chief of staff at Fort Drum, New York, noted, "Fort Drum is extremely interested in soldier families. The priority of our \$1.6-billion building effort speaks for itself in that the first thing we did was to build housing for families. The next priority item was the PX and commissary."

The new Fort Drum store, completed in 1988, was state of the art. It was emblematic of the services' growing concern over their members' *quality of life*—three words that in future years not only became capitalized, as "QOL," they became a regularly used buzz phrase among commissary advocates.

Two other phrases were popularized at AFCOMS and TSA by their respective commanders, Maj. Gen. M. Gary Alkire at AFCOMS and Brig. Gen. Charles St. Arnaud at TSA. Alkire at times lightheart-

edly referred to himself as "Head Bagger" while St. Arnaud called himself the "Chief Lettuce Fluffer." Neither comment was meant to be self-deprecatory. Both men, popular with their troops and civilian employees, simply saw themselves as friends of all ranks. Alkire placed a lot of emphasis on customer service, getting the customers the goods they wanted; St. Arnaud's saying, "Fluff the Lettuce," simply meant "get it done!"

Both commanders supported a popular



'CHIEF LETTUCE FLUFFER.'

Brig. Gen. Charles "Chuck" St. Arnaud, TSA commander, was an affable and personable. He worked with the transition team to continue high levels of customer service and preserve the heritage of the services' commissary systems.

Military Market, Army Times Publications

management method known as Total Quality Management (TQM), which endorsed decentralization. "TQM accepts the premise that all people are good and need to be encouraged; that they don't need to be micromanaged," St. Arnaud said. He said he did not believe in a headquarters being a "police force" that kept constant watch on its employees to make sure they did everything "by the book."

DeCA would actually have to function both ways: It would, by its very nature, be more centralized than the four disparate systems that preceded it; yet it would attempt to decentralize its decision-making powers by making the regions largely autonomous.

Alkire's NCOs offered proof of his popularity on January 14, 1989, when they formally presented him the highest honor that Air Force sergeants can bestow: the Order of the Sword. They honored Alkire because they felt he had substantially contributed to the commissary benefit, and because he had taken a personal interest in them and their welfare.

After an eventful and successful four-year term as AFCOMS commander, Alkire retired and was succeeded on December 28, 1989, by Maj. Gen. Robert F. Swarts. Before he left, Alkire had some cautionary and, as it turned out, accurate predictions for the future of commissaries. By then, the writing on the wall was becoming clear, and Alkire feared that consolidation was the beginning of the end for the commissary benefit.

Alkire was concerned the new agency would be unable to earn all the savings projected by the Jones Commission because Congress would take the projected savings "off the top," lifting anticipated savings out of the commissary budget before the savings had actually been realized. He figured the new agency's headquarters would need more than the projected three hundred people; that commissary district offices would soon have to close for a lack of funds, and their people would gravitate to the regions or would find themselves positions in a different career field; and that computer systems for the new agency would not be anywhere near ready by October 1, 1991. He also feared that ero-



'HEAD BAGGER.' Maj. Gen. M. Gary Alkire, AFCOMS commander, poses as AFCOMS' "Head Bagger." He was able to visit most of the AFCOMS stores during his tenure.

Military Market, Army Times Publications

sion of the commissary budget would result in reduced customer service and more customer complaints because of fewer cashiers, longer lines, and fewer operating hours.

Shortly after assuming command of AFCOMS, in addition to his objections regarding consolidation, Swarts announced at his first region commanders and directors meeting that there would be changes in philosophy during his tenure, while retaining the "customer first" commitment. This would mean reemphasizing a "back to basics" approach and a conscious effort to not overlap stock assortments with AAFES, when such restraint would be in the best interest of the customer.

Swarts had an ambitious, solid program in mind for AFCOMS, but the Jones Commission and

the consolidation of the services' commissary agencies took precedence. Swarts soon found himself in the difficult position of presiding over an organization that was being phased out of existence. He nonetheless dedicated himself to keeping AFCOMS viable even while assisting with the creation of the new agency.

AFCOMS, NAVRESSO, TSA COMMANDERS MOVE ON

Swarts remained AFCOMS commander through much of the transition period. His dedication to duty and his concern that commissaries and exchanges should not step on each others' toes would serve him in good stead. When his stint with AFCOMS was over, he became the commander of the Army and Air Force Exchange Service and thus was the only man to ever command both AAFES and one of the services' commissary agencies.

Swarts also was the first AFCOMS commander who did not end his Air Force career by retiring from AFCOMS. His successor, Col. James H. Scott, followed suit, although it was under slightly different circumstances. Scott became AFCOMS com-

mander effective August 12, 1991, and remained in that position for the final months of transition to DeCA. He then remained in place at Kelly Air Force Base, becoming DeCA's Midwest Region director in October 1991.

With the impending consolidation of commissaries, the Navy Resale and Services Support Office (NAVRESSO) became the Navy Exchange Service Command (NEXCOM), as of June 18, 1991. Rear Adm. H. Donald Weatherson remained in command, still in charge of Navy exchange operations.

NAVRESSO's commissary section had long been an innovator, and experimentation with new methodologies and technologies had been one of its hallmarks. NAVRESSO's predecessor, NSSO, had merged Navy exchanges and commissaries in



Col. James H. Scott



Rear Adm. H. Donald Weatherson

1946, thirty years before the Army and Air Force had centralized their commissaries.

In 1987, the Navy stores had become the first of the commissary systems to have 100 percent of its stores converted to scanning at the checkouts. In 1989, fifteen years before DeCA would give it a serious try, Navy stores were already experimenting with self-checkout systems that allowed customers to ring up their own purchases. At the time of the consolidation, the NAVRESSO logistics support systems for overseas stores, customer-oriented merchandising, and expanding line-item assortments were among the changes that had already been implemented. Such innovations had improved the Navy's bottom line to a remarkable extent: an overall increase of 42 percent from 1985 to 1990.

Not surprisingly, the Jones Commission Report and the consolidation to DeCA did not cause too much consternation at NAVRESSO, even after it became clear the agency was going to lose its commissaries to DeCA. That was at least in part because NAVRESSO's major focus had always been the exchanges, and because the Navy was comfortable with the proposals recommended by the Jones Commission.

For example, numerous functions that DeCA planned to centralize had already been centralized by NAVRESSO to either the regions or to the headquarters at Staten Island. These functions included time-keeping, purchasing, bill paying, inventory control, central distribution, and data processing support.

Tony DeGaetano, deputy commander of NAVRESSO's Commissary Operations Group at the time of the consolidation, remembered, "We continued serving our customers, and executed our program as scheduled, until September 30. We were willing to let the commissary side of the house come under the DoD roof while we concentrated on the NAF (non-appro-

priated fund) exchanges. We saw the opportunity for many of our commissaries to be replaced or updated far sooner than would have been the case had we remained separate from the other services." The main issue was whether or not the commissary mission could be carried out, and whether the sailors and retirees would continue to receive good customer service. "We felt our mission was to take care of the sailor and the retiree, and if the commissaries were going to be run in accordance with the expectations of the Jones Commission, those needs would be met, and maybe even exceeded."

Following the consolidation, the Navy continued to operate combined commissary/exchanges with DeCA's help. In 1991 these were known as "location stores" because they were generally small stores at remote or isolated geographical locations. Each was a combined commissary and exchange, which today would be called a NEXMART. DeCA would supply grocery items to these stores and provide wages, on a prorated basis, for the people who performed commissary duties (plus a small additional percentage for overhead costs).^{*} The items were sold at DeCA

prices, plus the surcharge, but NEXCOM would continue to actually run the stores, and the employees in the commissary end of the business were NEXCOM employees. DeCA would not be involved with the management of these stores. As things turned out, this arrangement proved satisfactory to both agencies. DeCA continues to supply NEXMARTs around the world.^{**}

Three days after the formation of NEXCOM, Brig. Gen. Charles St. Arnaud retired as the U.S. Army Troop Support Agency's commander and was succeeded by Col. William "Bill" Belcher, who led TSA for the remainder of the transition period.

DeCA EXAMINES THE MARINE CORPS SYSTEM

Although the Marine Corps ran only fifteen commissaries, both the Jones Commission and the DeCA transition team became interested in the Marines' system of commissary management and accounting. The Jones Commission cited the Marines' use of central distribution centers (CDCs), centralized pricing and automation. The Marines were justifiably proud of their



1991: TWO MEMBERS of the staff at the Navy Security Group Activity Edzell, Scotland, commissary pose for the photographer on the store's first official day as a DeCA facility, October 1.

U.S. Navy photo, DeCA historical file

^{*} —That is, a cashier ringing up goods at a rate of 55 percent commissary items and 45 percent exchange items would be paid 55 percent in DeCA funds, 45 percent in NEXCOM money. Meat department employees were paid 100 percent from commissary funds; cleaning crews were compensated based upon how much of the store was commissary, how much was exchange.

^{**} —The fact that the NEXMARTs were included in some store counts (because DeCA supported them) but were left out of others (because DeCA did not actually operate them), is another reason the number of commissaries differed from one list to another in 1991-92.

DEFENSE COMMISSARY AGENCY

1991: THUMBS UP: Shortly before DeCA's official activation, many of the headquarters staff posed for a group photo in front of the building, giving the "thumbs up," which at that point essentially meant "all systems go." It took a decade, but ultimately their confidence and optimism proved to be justified. *DeCA photo: Herb Greene, airborne from a cherry picker*



paperless programs, including electronic ordering, electronic invoicing, and electronic funds transfer.

The Marines also employed some seemingly unorthodox business practices that, as time passed, would eventually be adopted by DeCA. In 1990, the Marines had begun checking patron identification cards at the register rather than at the traditional ID desk near the front entrance. This policy saved billets at every Marine store, enabling the stores to place the extra staff at the cash registers, where they were needed.

Perhaps the Marines' best business practice was the Commissary Management Information System (CMIS), an automated network for supply, inventory, accounting, and voucher examination. Marine commissaries also had front-end scanning equipment, and were about to implement children's areas in stores, staffed and funded by the installation, making it easier for families with young children to shop. That idea wasn't new, having been used by commissaries after World War II, but the Marines chose to revive it.

In 1990, Joseph Jeu, head of the Marine

Corps Services Branch and a member of the Jones Commission, oversaw the commissary program; Patrick Nixon, who would later become a DeCA region director, and eventually became the agency's director and chief executive officer, was the Marines' commissary program manager.

Jeu acknowledged that not everything the Marines did was necessarily applicable to everything DeCA would need to do. But he was confident a lot of the principles by which the Marines worked were adaptable to the larger organization.

Because of the small number of stores they ran, the Marines would not press for a great many region director positions or region headquarters. They trusted the new organization to build needed new stores at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina; Camp Pendleton, California; and Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii. Their trust paid off; all three bases would receive new facilities between March and July 1993. The Marines also received a region headquarters and a directorship to go with it. Nixon became director of the Southwest Region, headquartered at Marine Corps Air Base El Toro, California.

DEFENSE COMMISSARY BOARD

Before DeCA was activated, an oversight board was created to provide input from the military departments. The Defense Commissary Board was originally designed to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas concerning the commissary benefit. Chaired by the DeCA director, its members included representatives from the Joint Chiefs of Staff, an officer and a non-commissioned officer from each of the services (appointed by the secretaries of the military departments), and others invited by the DeCA director.

The board's first meeting, held February 25, 1991, was the occasion for some interesting confrontations that proved that the discouragement felt by many commissary employees wasn't simply paranoia. The board members were getting the same uneasy feelings about the new agency and its emphasis on bottom-line savings—not savings to the customers, but savings of appropriated dollars.

Vice Adm. Jimmy Pappas, director of logistics for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, sent a memo to Assistant Secretary of Defense

BIRTH of an AGENCY



ON SEPTEMBER 27, 1991, the U.S. Army Troop Support Agency (TSA) at Fort Lee, Virginia, and the Air Force Commissary Service (AFCOMS) at Kelly Air Force Base, Texas, both held deactivation ceremonies, while the Navy Resale and Services Support Office (NAVRESSO) gave up its commissary functions and became the Navy Exchange Service Command (NEXCOM).

The following Monday, on September 30, the DeCA activation and building dedication ceremony took place at Fort Lee, though the activation did not become official until October 1. The building, located at 38th Street and E Avenue, was named for the late Rep. Bill Nichols (D-Alabama), a longtime commissary advocate.

In his remarks at the dedication and activation ceremonies, Colin P. McMillan, assistant secretary of defense for production and logistics (ASD/P&L), acknowledged the efforts of the transition team. He spoke for many when he said, "Today ... marks the fruition of many months of hard work accomplished by those charged with the transition of the services' commissary systems." He was pleased to note that DeCA was "on schedule and on budget."

For Dreska, the ceremony was the calm before the storm, and provided some time for catching his breath. He had prefaced his remarks at the activation by confiding, "I'll be happy when this day is over. Then the work will start."

In fact, he'd been working very hard for eighteen months, and the next day, October 1, was to be a hectic start to the next stage in the consolidation process. Stores around the world held grand opening parties and celebrations, many complete with ribbon-cuttings, cakes, brass bands, and big sales.

Dreska would travel to grand openings at Bolling Air Force Base, Fort Myer, Naval Air Station Patuxent River, and Marine Corps Base Quantico, all on the same day. This was a deliberate nod to honor each of



A MILITARY COLOR guard opens the DeCA activation and building dedication ceremony on September 30, 1991, at Fort Lee, Virginia.



▲ **MAJ. GEN. JOHN P. DRESKA** and William Flynt Nichols, unveil a portrait of Nichols' father, the late Congressman "Bill" Nichols. The portrait now hangs in the headquarters building, which was named in his honor.



▲ **DRESKA AND NICHOLS** share the ribbon-cutting duties. The official party included (from left) Congressman H. Martin Lancaster (D-North Carolina); Colin McMillan, assistant defense secretary (production and logistics); Congressman Norman Sisisky (D-Virginia); Lt. Gen. Leon E. Solomon, commanding general, U.S. Army Combined Arms Support Command and Fort Lee; and Chief Master Sgt. Russell N. Moffett, the agency's senior enlisted advisor. DeCA photos: Sgt. 1st Class Derryl Fields

the four services, and was symbolic of the "purple" nature of the newly consolidated agency. Only after attending these ceremonies would the general be able to return to headquarters and begin the arduous task of guiding the fledgling organization through its first phases of operation.

Personally, he had much to celebrate. As he had hoped all along, the changeover had been so transparent to the customers that few would have known their stores were under new management had it not been for the special ceremonies. And he remembered the words his father, who had made a fifty-year career of the grocery business, had said to him shortly before passing away in February 1991: "John, you've got to make DeCA happen." Dreska had done so, and today the agency he helped "happen" is still going strong.

Colin McMillan that echoed what many commissary workers had perceived: "I was given the impression [by DeCA] that the potential for greater taxpayer savings was the primary goal, and not necessarily to provide increased benefits to the customer." Pointing out that commissary patrons used \$15.1 million in food stamps and \$158 million in coupons during fiscal 1990, Pappas claimed that those figures were "five times as high as in comparable supermarket chains. This is indicative of the economic level of the majority of our patrons and highlights the important role the commissary benefit plays in supplementing military pay. The importance of maximizing this benefit cannot be overemphasized."

Army Chief of Staff Gen. Carl E. Vuono had the same impression, saying Army representatives left the meeting very discouraged because "it was clear to them that DeCA is overly oriented on operating efficiencies and savings, and not sufficiently focused on ... better service to the members of the armed forces and their families. ... You've got a long way to go before I'm convinced that commissary consolidation is going to improve the support provided to our soldiers and their families. ... Commissaries are a key element in our effort to recruit and retain high-quality men and women, but commissary privileges will only be attractive as long as the service is the best that we can provide."

Maj. Gen. Joseph A. "Bud" Ahearn, former AFCEM board chairman, had the same concerns and reminded McMillan that the Air Force had initially disagreed with the consolidation "because we believed that consolidation would degrade Air Force commissary service." That degradation was exactly what he feared was going to happen unless DeCA shifted its priorities.

DeCA representatives replied that whatever taxpayer savings were realized, DeCA intended to reinvest those savings into areas that would also improve customer service. McMillan rejected the criticisms and instructed DeCA to hold its course. Still, it is noteworthy that at such a late date the services were still making

these observations. In the following months, when DeCA personnel used the word "savings," they were careful to make it clear that they meant it as "savings to the customer" as well as to the taxpayer.

The next Defense Commissary Board meeting was at the Pentagon in May 1991, and it proved to be less confrontational. The meeting included a discussion of the latest patron survey, initiated by DeCA to establish a marketing research baseline. The survey had been conducted by the Wirthlin Group, which had interviewed a thousand Air Force personnel and spouses in April and May of 1990. A new round of fourteen hundred interviews among members of the other services had already been started on April 8, 1991. Preliminary results of both surveys showed strong support for the commissaries.

DeCA ACTIVATION

Finally, fifteen months of effort began to pay off. On September 27, 1991, both TSA at Fort Lee and AFCEM at Kelly Air Force Base held deactivation ceremonies, while NAVRESSO gave up its commissary functions and became the Navy Exchange Service Command (NEXCOM).

The following Monday, on September 30, 1991, the DeCA activation and building dedication ceremony took place at Fort Lee. The building, located at 38th Street and E Avenue, was named for the late Rep. Bill Nichols (D-Alabama). Several hundred people were in attendance, including Congressman Norman Sisisky, who had been instrumental in bringing DeCA to Fort Lee; Congressman H. Martin Lancaster (D-North Carolina) of the House Armed Services Committee, and chairman of that committee's Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Panel; Assistant Secretary of Defense (production and logistics) Colin P. McMillan; Lt. Gen. Leon E. Salomon, Fort Lee



CONGRESSMAN Norman Sisisky (D-Virginia) speaks during the DeCA activation ceremony. It was Sisisky who pushed for DeCA to be located at Fort Lee. He died March 29, 2001, at the age of 79, while recuperating from surgery. DeCA dedicated a new wing of the headquarters in his honor in August 2001. DeCA photo: Sgt. 1st Class Derryl Fields

commander; and William Flynt Nichols, son of the late Congressman William Nichols.

In his remarks at the dedication ceremony, Congressman Sisisky said, "This is a dream come true for the post," and called Congressman Nichols "one of the very greatest advocates for military personnel and their families. It is particularly fitting this building be named for him." As a businessman, Nichols had "felt a sense of responsibility to do right by his employees," and "understood the importance of rewarding them for their efforts. I think that accounts for Bill's remarkable measure of common sense and compassion. I hope that having Bill's name on the building will remind us of his high standards. They require us all to renew our dedication to serving people in the military. I like to think Bill will be up there somewhere looking over our shoulders to see whether we do the right thing."

Dreska reminded those in attendance that Nichols had served in the armed forces, had been wounded during World

War II, and was a commissary shopper himself. Nichols “never forgot his Alabama roots, and always looked out for our junior service members in carrying out his duties. His record and the legislation he supported are fine testimony to his caring about our service members. He was keenly interested in preserving the commissary benefit when others were not too convinced of its importance to service members’ quality of life.”

Dreska reiterated the accomplishments of the transition team, and some of the agency’s goals and plans for the future. “Our vision of becoming the best-run grocery chain in America takes a giant step toward reality today. DeCA will build on the solid foundation laid by each of the services’ commissary systems, and by those who have worked so hard at the commissary level to improve customer service.”

Dreska also paid respects to the late Congressman Dan Daniel, Nichols’ close colleague. Together they had “fought many battles on Capitol Hill for the military commissary system.” Congressman Lancaster echoed those sentiments: “No one contributed more than Dan Daniel and Bill Nichols to military quality of life.”

Congressman Nichols’ son, William Flynt Nichols Jr., recalled how his father clipped coupons and took him to shop in the Fort Belvoir commissary every Saturday morning, where he greeted customers, store workers and managers, asking them how he could help them on the Hill. “He loved his country, the military, and all people. MWR, PXs and commissaries were his greatest, No. 1 priorities.” Giving constant personal attention to others meant his shopping suffered: “After we got home, mom would go shopping and get the things we really needed.”

Noting the importance of the agency’s long heritage, Dreska emphasized at the headquarters activation, “DeCA will build on the sound foundation laid by each of the services’ commissary systems, and by those who work so hard at the commissary level to improve customer service. This consolidation is not about tearing down the existing systems and starting

“The challenge of everyone in DeCA is to continue to protect this benefit ... to continue to enhance what military members and families have for years rated as one of their top benefits. Installation commanders can rest assured that the valuable quality of life benefit that we provide will continue. We’re in the people business. We will continue to help them do a better job of taking care of their people.”

**— Maj. Gen. John P. Dreska,
during DeCA’s activation
ceremony**



anew. The merger of the systems must be viewed as an evolution of the commissary systems, a further refinement of the overall process of delivering this vital non-pay compensation benefit.

“The challenge of everyone in DeCA is to continue to protect this benefit ... to continue to enhance what military members and families have for years rated as one of their top benefits.

“Installation commanders can rest assured that the valuable quality of life benefit that we provide will continue. We’re in the people business. We will continue to help them do a better job of taking care of their people.” Dreska said he was aiming for customer savings of at least 25 percent. He promised to listen to the patrons and establish longer hours.

Dreska added, “We’ve received fantastic support from DoD. No payroll transfer in the Department of Defense was anywhere near what we’ve been through, especially when you take it from all four services.”

The accomplishment was truly remarkable. In fifteen months’ time, the services’

twenty-two regions had been combined into seven, with eleven districts and two service centers. Four headquarters had been consolidated into one, and 1,670 jobs had been cut from the four services’ commissary systems above store level. The new agency assumed control of 411 sales stores and two troop-support-only facilities in Greenland, and provided support to the commissary sections in seventeen NEXMARTs.

Stores worldwide staged events celebrating “Grand opening under DeCA.” Many parties and celebrations included ribbon-cuttings, cakes, speeches, and big sales. If it hadn’t been for these special events, most customers probably would have been unaware there had been a changeover. The process had largely gone unnoticed by the patrons, just as Dreska had hoped.

In the final tally a few months later, every employee of the old commissary systems had been either offered a job or had been able to retire. This was true even in Europe, where job entitlements varied from one country to another, so foreign employees actually had no transfer rights during the DeCA consolidation. All but twelve commissary employees in Europe either retired or had accepted a position elsewhere within the federal government. Those twelve had turned down job offers that would have forced them to relocate.

A lot of blood, plenty of sweat, and not a few tears went into DeCA’s creation, but the people who made those sacrifices were determined to make things work. Those who were responsible for the transition never really received the credit nor the accolades they deserved, because they were immediately immersed in the job of getting the new organization running smoothly. As it turned out, there would be some severe bumps in their path. But all-in-all, it had been a remarkable accomplishment, achieved in an amazingly short amount of time, and within budget—a rare feat indeed.



1991: MAJ. GEN. JOHN P. DRESKA, DeCA's first director, addresses the crowd attending ceremonies on September 30 activating the Defense Commissary Agency. The event also dedicated DeCA's headquarters building to the late Congressman William F. "Bill" Nichols. Seated behind Dreska were (from left) Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Russell N. Moffett, the agency's first senior enlisted advisor; the congressman's son, William Flynt Nichols; Army Lt. Gen. Leon E. Salomon, commanding general, U.S. Army Combined Arms Support Command and Fort Lee; Colin McMillan, assistant secretary of defense (production and logistics) [obscured]; and Congressman Norman Sisisky. *DeCA photo: Sgt. 1st Class Derryl Fields*

CHRONOLOGY of KEY EVENTS

1989 - 1991

1989

THE NATIONAL Defense Authorization Act strongly endorsed the existing military resale system by prohibiting the privatization of the military commissaries.

1989

NAVY COMMISSARIES were stocking an average of 7,800 line items in their grocery departments. (*Navy Commissary Program*, p. 5)

1989

REFLECTIVE of the way things had changed since World War II, Army Col. Herbert Lloyd, chief of staff at Fort Drum, New York, noted, "Fort Drum is extremely interested in soldier families. And, the priority of our \$1.6-billion-building effort speaks for itself in that the first thing we did was to build housing for families. The next priority was the PX and commissary." (*Troop Support Digest*, Spring-Summer 1989, p. 33)

JAN. 14, 1989

MAJ. GEN. M. Gary Alkire, commander of AFCOMS, received the Order of the Sword—the highest accolade Air Force NCOs could bestow—from the agency's NCOs (*see photo below*).

FEB. 9, 1989

World Events: Soviet troops pull out of Afghanistan.

MARCH 2, 1989

MARVIN LEATH, chairman of the Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Panel of the House Armed Services Committee's Subcommittee on Readiness, wrote to then-Army Maj. Gen. Donald W. Jones, deputy assistant secretary of defense (military manpower and personnel poli-

cy), directing the DoD to "initiate a comprehensive study of the commissary system."

While reiterating that he was interested in protecting the commissary privilege, and stating the 1989 National Defense Authorization Act strongly endorsed the commissary privilege by prohibiting the privatization of military commissaries, Leath said it was time for an "unrestricted baseline reassessment of the DoD commissary program" because of the many disparate and inconsistent approaches the four services' commissaries were taking.

MARCH 12, 1989

A CONTRACT home-delivery service at the Bitburg Air Base, Germany, commissary cost 60 cents per bag and was much appreciated by personnel (especially those with small children) living in nearby high-rise apartments. The service was reminiscent of times when home delivery had been commonplace. (*Stars & Stripes*, European edition, 12 Mar 1989)

MARCH 15, 1989

SIXTEEN SOVIET physicians—fifteen generals and one KGB agent—toured the Langley Air Force Base, Virginia, commissary as part of an exchange program to promote better understanding between the United States and the USSR. (*AFCOMS Checkout*, May/June 1989, p. 12)

MARCH 29-30, 1989

FIRST EXERCISE conducted at the AFCOMS Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

APRIL 1989

THE JONES Commission, a special working group, began meeting at the Pentagon and nearby



1989: ORDER OF THE SWORD, (January). Chief master sergeants from AFCOMS headquarters and its regions present Maj. Gen. M. Gary Alkire with a crossed sword and certificate that accompanied the bestowal of the "Order of the Sword." Front row, (from left): Chief Master Sgts. Horace Brown and Glenn Lewis, Maj. Gen. Alkire, and Chief Master Sgt. Jerry Laycock. Back row (from left): Chief Master Sgts. Robert Stromberg, Steve Overly, Apolinar (Paul) Pena, Richard Scholz, Benny Harper, and Russ Moffett. The sword itself, fifty-eight inches long, is bigger than most historical broadswords actually used in battle. Today it is on display at DeCA headquarters.

AFCOMS photo, DeCA historical file

Crystal City, Virginia, to assess military commissary programs. Composed of twenty-three members, it was headed by Army Lt. Gen. Donald W. Jones, deputy assistant secretary of defense. AFCOMS' Col. Richard J. Tessier served as Jones' staff director and study group leader.

JUNE 3-4, 1989

World Events/History: The Chinese army crushed a peaceful demonstration by thousands of pro-democracy students and workers protesting in Peking's **Tiananmen Square**. Sources vary from 400 to 2,600 civilian deaths. Injuries numbered from 7,000 to 10,000.

SEPTEMBER 1989

ARMY BRIG. GEN. Charles E. St. Arnaud replaced Brig. Gen. James S. Hayes as the commander of the Troop Support Agency (TSA).

SEPT. 21-22, 1989

HURRICANE HUGO made landfall in South Carolina. The commissary at Shaw Air Force Base sustained heavy damage (including the destruction of several walls, one meat cooler, and the roof over the store's freezer). The store was able to continue operating for five days using emergency generators. Rather than let its meat products spoil, the store gave away \$7,000 worth of meat to various relief organizations on base. Meanwhile, the store at Charleston Air Force Base was able to open the day after the hurricane passed. Six registers and a handful of employees kept busy, with the biggest sellers being milk, bread, charcoal, and thousands of gallons (sixty-five hundred gallons per day) of bottled water. ("Lessons Learned from Hurricane Hugo," 22 Jun 1990, filed in "Disasters" binder in DeCA historical files)

SEPT. 22, 1989

THE FIRST DRAFT of the Jones Commission Report was released to the services for comment.

OCT. 1, 1989

THE ARMY food service function was transferred from TSA to the U.S. Army Logistics Center. (Hucles, *Haversack*, p. 136)

OCT. 31, 1989

World History: The Berlin Wall came down after separating communist East Berlin and East Germany from democratic West Berlin since 1961. The wall's demise signaled changes not only for Germany but also for the Soviet Union, Europe, and the rest of the world.

NOV. 9, 1989

A BOMB EXPLODED outside the commissary at Izmir, Turkey. Damage was light, and since the commissary was closed at the time, there were no



1989: LaJUNTA, Colorado. Lt. Col. Harry Mamaux, AFCOMS Southwest Region director, presents a ceremonial key to Lt. Col. James B. Houston, commander of LaJunta Air Force Station. AFCOMS presented these keys at every grand opening and reopening. The keys were symbolic of the philosophy of all the commissary agencies: "We built the store and we run it, but the store belongs to the people of the installation." DeCA historical file, courtesy Peterson Air Force Base

DEC. 14, 1989

injuries. The explosion may have been connected with similar bombings in Ankara and Istanbul, which were carried out in protest over the results of the Turkish elections.

DEC. 19, 1989

THE FINAL Jones Commission Report recommended two options: keep the status quo, with several adjustments, or completely consolidate all DoD commissaries. The report, which was the document upon which the consolidation of the services' commissary systems into DeCA was based, did not recommend privatization.

DEC. 28, 1989

U.S. Military History: U.S. forces in Panama began the ouster of President Manuel Noriega under **Operation Just Cause**. The U.S. government had indicted Noriega on international drug trafficking. Noriega took refuge in the Vatican embassy in Panama City, but eventually surrendered to U.S. forces and was transported to Florida to stand trial for violation of drug laws.

DEC. 29, 1989

MAJ. GEN. Robert F. Swarts became AFCOMS commander, replacing Maj. Gen. M. Gary Alkire, whose retirement was effective January 1, 1990. Swarts declared 1990 to be AFCOMS' "Year of the Customer."

SWARTS CALLED a special staff meeting to address the Jones Commission's revised report, discuss its possible ramifications, and prepare a suitable

1980s - 1990s

response. The basic response would be that AFComs opposed consolidation of DoD commissaries; but if DoD decided in favor of it, then AFComs would volunteer to be the lead service.

Grocery Store History: The military commissaries weren't the only ones consolidating. Over the decade a number of private-sector grocery mergers occurred, including: Dominick's, Randall's, Tom Thumb, Carr's, and Vons (with Safeway stores); Fred Meyer, Ralphs, QFC, King Soopers, and Cala-Bell (with Kroger); Stop & Shop, Bi-Lo, and Ahold (Giant Foods); Kohl's, Waldbaum's, and Farmer Jack (A & P); and Big Star and Food World (with Harris-Teeter).

1990

1990

TSA's **DIRECTORATE** of clothing and services moved to the Army Materiel Command. This included water purification & desalinization.

JANUARY 1990

REAR ADM. H. Donald Weatherson replaced **Rear Adm. Rodney K. Squibb** as commander of NAVRESSO. (Navy Commissary Program)

JAN. 23, 1990

DURING HIS first AFComs Region Commanders and Directors Conference, **Maj. Gen. Robert F. Swarts** announced that the commissary service would retain the "customer first" commitment but reemphasize a "back to basics" direction and attempt to avoid overlap stock assortments with AAFES exchanges.

JAN. 23-26, 1990

THE FIRST, and last, AFComs "Prime FARE Rodeo" competition was held at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, in conjunction with the AFComs Region Commanders/Directors Conference. When the conference was held again, DeCA would be sponsoring it.

FEB. 11, 1990

World History/Politics: Nelson Mandela was freed from a South African prison after being incarcerated for twenty-seven years. Mandela would become president of South Africa four years later.

MARCH 27, 1990

MAJ. GEN. Robert F. Swarts (AFComs), **Brig. Gen. Charles E. St. Arnaud** (TSA), **Rear Adm. H. Donald Weatherson** (NAVRESSO), and **Brig. Gen. Wayne T. "Tom" Adams** (USMC) testified before the House Armed Services Committee's Subcommittee on Readiness. The committee was disposed to let commissary consolidation become a reality, but left unanswered the question of what form the new agency would take.

MAY 15, 1990

U.S. Military History: The Philippine government announced that **leases on all U.S. bases were terminated**, with the bases to be closed in 1991.

MAY 15, 1990

A **LETTER** from Deputy Secretary of Defense **Donald Atwood** announced that a **Defense Commissary Agency** would be formed to consolidate the commissary systems. The director of the new agency would report to **Colin R. McMillan**, the assistant secretary of defense for production and logistics (ASD/PL). Production and Logistics was to be allocated \$3 million within five days for initial operations and maintenance



1990: PRIME FARE RODEO.

ABOVE: The Northeast Region team conducts a planning session. The team was one of ten regional teams participating in the annual AFComs competition held at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. The competition consisted of seven events: "Fog of War," tent raising, forklift obstacle course, ground crew ensemble, troop support, confidence course, and the TFE Test. **RIGHT:** Staff Sgt. Philip Prater, Team leader, participates in the troop support event. The crescent symbol on the box still denotes "subsistence." AFComs photos, DeCA historical file



resources for the transition period. McMillan was to coordinate with the director of Administration and Management and other unspecified appropriate officials to submit a charter directive for the new agency by July 16, 1990, and to assemble a transition team on or about June 1. This letter officially established DeCA.

MAY 17, 1990

A **MEMO** from **Colin McMillan** (ASD/PL) to the assistant secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force and to the director of the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) asked for nominations to the DoD Commissary System Transition Team.

JUNE 20, 1990

THE SERVICES selected people from their commissary agencies, and components of DLA for duty with the transition team (see *Appendix 8*).

JUNE 26, 1990

AT THE ALA Northeast Region Conference, Colin McMillan (ASD/PL) announced **Army Maj. Gen. John P. Dreska** would be DeCA's first director. Dreska, at the time, was the commander of the Defense Construction Supply Center of the Defense Logistics Agency in Columbus, Ohio.

JULY 9, 1990

THE DeCA transition team began meeting in Washington, D.C.

JULY 11, 1990

DRESKA, as the newly selected DeCA director, visited AFCOMS headquarters and met with **Maj. Gen. Robert F. Swarts**. Dreska also addressed the AFCOMS commissary officers, meeting in San Antonio for ACT (annual commissary training) '90.

AUG. 2-3, 1990

U.S. Military History: Iraq invaded and conquered Kuwait. Iraq promised to withdraw its troops within a few days, but this would never occur. The United Nations, including the Soviet Union, the United States, and most of the Arab world, condemned the invasion.

AUG. 9, 1990

AFCOMS' Emergency Operations Center began its first real-world operation after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, which was threatening to escalate into a full-scale war in the Persian Gulf. The EOC maintained constant readiness and response throughout the crisis.

AUG. 30, 1990

AFCOMS had established a central distribution center at Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, for the distribution of rations, deployed 134 personnel, and shipped more than 20,000 cases of MREs and 2,000 tons of B-Rations to Saudi Arabia.



1990: FORT DEVENS, Massachusetts. Charles Wiker (left), TSA Northeast Commissary Region director, helps Fort Devens officials turn the ceremonial shovelfuls of dirt during the groundbreaking for the new store. TSA photo, DeCA historical file

SEPT. 18, 1990

THE DeCA transition team recommended to **Colin R. McMillan** (ASD/P&L) that the new agency should be located at Fort Lee, Virginia.

SEPT. 19-20, 1990

THE COMMISSARY service commanders met with the DeCA transition team at Defense Logistics Agency at Cameron Station, Virginia, to discuss and clarify the draft DeCA headquarters organization. Participants particularly discussed bill-paying and accounting methods, and the manpower needed for certain functions.

OCT. 1, 1990

DeCA WAS ESTABLISHED as a provisional organization, as per the May 17 memo from **Colin McMillan**, assistant secretary of defense for production and logistics.

OCT. 3, 1990

World History: The reunification of East and West Germany became effective on this date.

OCT. 10, 1990

THE FINAL AFCOMS Board of Directors meeting was held at AFCOMS headquarters. Briefings centered on the transition into DeCA, a recap of the service's construction of new commissary facilities since 1976, and its support of Desert Shield. **Maj. Gen. Joseph A. Ahearn**, chairman of the board, commended AFCOMS on fourteen years of leadership and its positive impact on "the performance of our warriors." He also urged AFCOMS personnel moving on to DeCA to

strive for quality service.

NOV. 9, 1990

DoD DIRECTIVE 5105.55, Subject Defense Commissary Agency, was issued by Deputy Secretary of Defense Donald J. Atwood. This directive covered the purpose, applicability, mission, organization, functions, responsibilities, organizational relationships, authority, and administration of the new agency. Since the directive was effective immediately, the Second Biennial Review of the Defense Agencies and DoD Field Activities (Nov 1991, p. B-1), used *this* as the date of DeCA's official establishment, rather than May 15, 1990.

NOV. 26-28, 1990

AT THE COMMANDERS' Conference at TSA Headquarters, Fort Lee, Virginia, participants discussed proposals on the various functional areas of DeCA, a draft timeline for the new agency, as well as numerous unresolved issues. This was when **Maj. Gen. John P. Dreska's** first selections for deputy director, region directors, and headquarters departmental directors were first publicly announced. (*Military Market*, Jan 1991, pp. 16, 145)

DEC. 7, 1990

MAJ. GEN. Robert F. Swarts told AFComS personnel that if DeCA selected them, they were available to go, unless they were absolutely needed by AFComS. "Getting DeCA established and rolling is just too important for us to say no," he said.

DEC. 13, 1990

DRESKA selected **Roy C. Speight**, deputy to the AFComS commander, as the DeCA deputy director.

JAN. 13, 1991

Political History: Soviet soldiers seized eight key buildings in **Vilnius, Lithuania**, in a crackdown on liberal nationalists. Dozens of people were killed and injured. The Soviets may have taken this action at this particular time because the West was distracted by the situation in the Middle East, and was also unwilling to interfere in Soviet politics, since the USSR was being counted upon for its cooperation in the Middle East crisis. Ultimately the Soviet action in Lithuania only led to the situation escalating, resulting in Lithuania declaring independence—the first of the Soviet republics to do so when the USSR began to dissolve. The significance of the ultimate dissolution of the USSR is obvious: The Cold War was coming to an end, and one of the long-term results was that the U.S. military would experience numerous cutbacks.

JAN. 14, 1991

U.S. Military History: As the **Jan. 15 deadline** (effective at midnight) for **Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait** drew closer, U.S. military installations around the world went on heightened security alerts. Iraqi **President Saddam Hussein** had warned that if the West wanted war, the "mother of all battles" would be the result; the Western allies believed that worldwide terrorist acts would likely occur.



1990: CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas. The longevity of this store at Naval Air Station Corpus Christi was remarkable. It dated back to 1942 and had undergone several renovations that kept it open for fifty years. It caught fire in July 1959, but damage was kept to a minimum, and the store eventually reopened. When DeCA took over the store in 1991, it had 14,474 square feet of sales area and eight checkouts. DeCA replaced it with a new facility in November 1994. *DeCA historical file*



1991: NAVAL SUBMARINE BASE BANGOR, Washington. As the commissary celebrated its transition to DeCA on October 1, customer Linda Wright received a new bicycle thanks to a vendor give-away. Congratulating her and presenting the bike is Bob Meria, deputy commissary officer; watching is the commissary officer, Navy Master Chief Bob Liwanag. The Bangor commissary was one of NAVRESSO's finest stores. Under Liwanag it had won two of the previous three Richard M. Paget awards as the Navy's best large commissary. Under DeCA, it won the "best store" award in 2004. *DeCA photo: Gene Royer*

JAN. 16, 1991

AT 5:35 P.M. (Eastern Standard Time), the U.S. and its allies shifted from Operation Desert Shield, the defense of Saudi Arabia, to **Operation Desert Storm**, the military action aimed at removing Iraqi forces from Kuwait. The first operations were in the form of round-the-clock air strikes against military and government targets.

By this time, AFCOMS had been providing MREs and other rations to U.S. military personnel from every service. The EOC did not go into a heightened state of readiness since the means of providing subsistence support were already in operation. **Maj. Clesson G. Allman**, former AFCOMS headquarters executive officer, oversaw AFCOMS troop support operations in the Gulf.

Ultimately, AFCOMS deployed 171 personnel from stations around the world and shipped more than \$55.1 million worth of rations (nearly four-thousand short tons) into the theater of operations.

FEB. 23, 1991

U.S. Military History: Allied offensive ground operations began in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Iraq. The U.S. and its allies enjoyed enormous success, with few casualties.



1991: THE RUSSIANS ARE COMING. Soviet sailors from the guided missile cruiser *Marshall Ustinov*, the guided missile destroyer *Simferopol*, and the replenishment ship *Dnestr* visited NAVRESSO's commissary and exchange at Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Florida, in July. Here, two of the sailors pose with two NAVRESSO employees. This was not the first time such détente had taken place in a commissary; sixteen high-ranking Soviet physicians—fifteen generals and one KGB agent—had visited the store at Langley Air Force Base, Virginia, in 1989. Such visits were a sign that the Cold War was rapidly coming to an end. Photo courtesy Exchange & Commissary News

HAPPY TRAILS. Brig. Gen. Charles E. St. Arnaud, commander of the U.S. Army Troop Support Agency, addresses the crowd of well-wishers during retirement ceremonies on June 21, 1991, at Fort Lee, Virginia. Watching and listening is Maj. Gen. John P. Dreska, who had been appointed as the commander of the Defense Commissary Agency, which was soon to absorb St. Arnaud's agency. DeCA historical file



FEB. 25, 1991

DRESKA CHAIRED the first meeting of the Defense Commissary Board. Its members included representatives from the Joint Chiefs of Staff, an officer and a non-commissioned officer from each of the services (appointed by the secretaries of the military departments), and others invited by the DeCA director. Board members had misgivings about the new agency and its initial emphasis on prioritizing the savings of appropriated dollars over savings to the customers.

FEB. 27, 1991

U.S. Military History: President George H. W. Bush declared victory in the Gulf War and announced a cease-fire, contingent upon Iraq's compliance with twelve U.N. resolutions. Of the more than half-million U.S. troops sent to the Gulf, 148 were killed in combat, another 145 died in accidents, and 467 were wounded.

MARCH 14, 1991

AFCOMS' directorate of engineering relocated to the second floor of the former Central Region offices at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, in preparation for becoming the design and construction division of the DeCA facilities directorate.

JUNE 1991

ARMY COL. Bill G. Belcher replaced **Brig. Gen. Charles A. St. Arnaud** as TSA commander for the final months of the transition to DeCA.

JUNE 12, 1991

AFTER SIX HUNDRED years of dormancy, the **Mount Pinatubo** volcano, on the main island of Luzon, in the Philippines, erupted, causing a major ash fall. Three days later, Typhoon Yunya slammed into the islands, adding high winds, terrifying lightning and thunder, torrential rains, flooding, mudslides, and ash flows—mixtures of mud, water, and ash, called *lahars*—to the devastation. The resulting destruction to U.S. bases—including the commissaries at Clark Air Base, Naval Communications Station San Miguel and Naval Base Subic Bay—would play a part in the United States' eventual departure from the Philippines.

JUNE 1991

Political History: Slovenia and Croatia declared their independence from Yugoslavia. Major fighting erupted between Croats and Serbs.

JUNE 18, 1991

WITH THE impending consolidation of commissaries, NAVRESSO was renamed NEXCOM, for Navy Exchange Service Command. (*Navy Commissary Program*, p. 7)

JUNE 21, 1991

A RETIREMENT ceremony was held for Army

Brig. Gen. Charles A. St. Arnaud, TSA commander (*see photo, page 384*).

JULY 17-18, 1991

EMPLOYEES and customers at the Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Florida, commissary found out first-hand exactly how much friendlier the United States and the Soviet Union had become (*see photo, page 384*). Sailors from three Soviet warships—the guided missile cruiser *Marshal Ustinov*, the guided missile destroyer *Simferopol* and the replenishment ship *Dnestr*—were allowed to shop at the base's retail outlets. (*E & C News*, 15 Oct 1991, p. 54)

JULY 31, 1991

THE CLARK Air Base commissary in the Philippines officially closed after being knocked out of operation during the eruption of Mount Pinatubo.

AUG. 12, 1991

AIR FORCE COL. James H. Scott replaced **Maj. Gen. Robert F. Swarts** as AFCOMS commander for the final transition to DeCA.

AUG. 18-21, 1991

Political History: A coup was attempted in the Soviet Union to oust Premier Mikhail Gorbachev from power. Soviet tanks in the streets of Moscow backed the Russian people instead of the coup leaders. **Boris Yeltsin**, who in June had been elected president of the Russian Federation, stood atop an armored personnel carrier to support Gorbachev.

SEPT. 27, 1991

TSA AT FORT LEE, Virginia, and AFCOMS at Kelly Air Force Base, Texas, both held deactivation ceremonies.

SEPT. 30, 1991

A DEDICATION ceremony was conducted for the DeCA headquarters building at Fort Lee. The building was named for the late **Congressman Bill Nichols**. DeCA's activation ceremony was also held, with the activation becoming official the following day.

OCT. 1, 1991

THE PREMIERE issue of *Military Grocer*, a new magazine devoted to the commissaries, was published by Edward M. and Loretta M. Downey of Downey Communications in Bethesda, Maryland.

OCT. 1, 1991

DeCA WAS ACTIVATED. The new organization officially assumed control of over four hundred commissaries, supported thirteen Navy location stores, and had more than twenty-two thousand employees. (*See Appendix 11 for DeCA's original store locations.*)

COMMISSARY

Picture Portfolio: Then and Now

GRAND OPENINGS

A TRADITIONAL COMMISSARY ritual is the grand opening, conducted when a new or renovated store opens its doors. Since World War II, at least, these events have been local newsmakers and community social events. Nowadays, huge crowds attend, eager to see the new facility and take advantage of the numerous opening-day bargains. Often there are bands and color guards, and sometimes reanactment groups or official military ceremonial units inject some local history into the proceedings. Dignitaries make short speeches, and there are many heartfelt congratulations exchanged, followed by the symbolic ribbon-cutting. Once the doors open, the crowd surges forward to breathe life into the new facility. A festive air prevails with decorations, vendor-sponsored contests, giveaways, and free food samples. Product mascots greet customers of all ages.

When AFCOMS personnel opened a commissary, they always presented the base commander with a ceremonial key to the store. The message was, "It's your store, we just run it for you." TSA picked up on that idea, and gave it a little twist: The base engineers sometimes presented a ceremonial key to the TSA people who were going to run the commissary.

Today there are no keys, but the messages are the same: *This building is run by the agency for the installation and the local customers.* And, as with AFCOMS and TSA, every new store gets a bronze plaque reminding the patrons that the store was built with their surcharge funds. They are not only customers; they are partners, investing in the future of the benefit.



▲ **1951: REDSTONE ARSENAL, Alabama.** This is an unusual photograph in that it was taken near the *end* of the grand opening day rather than the *beginning*. The shelves were by now becoming bare; only bread, crackers, and some canned goods are evident in this view. The sign on the railing in the foreground says, "Leave your little trouble here and shop in peace;" it was not referring to the customers' children, but to an old German adage to leave your cares at the door. The sign is a reminder that Redstone was home to Wernher Von Braun and numerous German scientists who were working on the U.S. missile program. DeCA historical file

1940s: CAMP LEJEUNE, North Carolina. Customers pack the store during the grand opening at the Midway Park community commissary. The store is swamped by the overflow crowd.

U.S. Marine Corps Historical Center



▲ **1958: SHEPPARD** Air Force Base, Texas. Keeping the children entertained and out of trouble while their parents shop proves easy to do with a movie projector and some well-chosen cartoons. *Military Market, Army Times Publications*



1958: TRUMAN PLAZA, BERLIN, Germany. Not to be outdone by whimsical ribbons made from sausages, officials in Berlin use a butcher-block table and a meat cleaver to cut this store's ribbon.

Military Market, Army Times Publications



▲ **1956: PLATTSBURGH** Air Force Base, New York. For a few years it became popular to use link sausages instead of ribbons for grand opening ribbon-cuttings.

Military Market, Army Times Publications



▲ **1955: FOSTER** Air Force Base, Texas. Tech Sgt. J. H. Irwin, the store noncommissioned officer-in-charge, waits with meat department employees for their first customer at the grand opening.

Military Market, Army Times Publications

► 1957: TAIPEI,

Taiwan. The April 29 grand opening included a cake-cutting. Here, Chief Commissaryman R. E. Tharp serves customers slices of the ceremonial cake, which is topped with an icing-covered aircraft carrier, at the store's "commissioning ceremonies." The flag-bearing decoration atop the cake looks like a combination of a pagoda and a deck island. Modern grand openings always include at least one cake, but this cake is the earliest one found as of the date of this book's publication.

U.S. Navy Historical Center



► 1978: BARKSDALE

Air Force Base, Louisiana. Enlisted airmen cut the ribbon at the grand opening of the new AFCOMS commissary. The old store, originally built as a quartermaster warehouse in 1934, had a dozen checkouts and a sales area of seventeen thousand square feet, and had won the Air Force award as "Best Store, Worldwide," in 1974 and 1975. The new facility was nearly twice as big, and was equipped with twenty-one checkouts. Still in operation today, it was a co-winner of the Eastern Region's "Best Large Store" in 1999-2000.

AFCOMS photo, DeCA historical file



► 1969: MIDWAY ISLAND,

Virginia. Marine Lt. Gen. Lewis J. Fields poses with a young mom and her baby during the grand opening of the branch store at Midway Island, a housing area ten miles from the main store at Marine Corps Base Quantico. Fields took a personal interest in this store when he discovered the enlisted families living in the Midway Island community had to make the twenty-mile round-trip to the base's main store. That trip caused real difficulties for those families with children, or for those with only one vehicle. The store's four hundred line items included products that were geared for small families, such as fifty baby food items, small-cut roasts, and small packages of chops and poultry. Fields said the store was modeled after a similar facility in Camp Pendleton's Sterling housing area.

Military Market, Army Times Publications





1976: FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas.

On July 7, Col. DeWitt Cook, director of industrial operations at Fort Sam Houston, presents a ceremonial key to the commissary to Ron Renaud, deputy director of TSA's Midwest Region commissary field office. U.S. Army photo, DeCA historical file



◀ 1982: FORT STORY,

Virginia. During the June 15 grand opening, cashier Beverly Wilson rings up the purchases of Col. J. T. Sprague as, in the background, a photographer captures the moment on film from a different angle.

TSA photo, DeCA historical file

1988: BROOKS Air Force Base, Texas. Grand openings often draw upon local culture and entertainers to add excitement to the occasion. These mariachi performers liven things up during the store opening in San Antonio.

AFCOMS photo, DeCA historical file



► **1986: GIEBELSTADT,**

Germany. Soldiers in this small community receive an early Christmas present with the grand opening of a new store on December 23. Brig. Gen. James S. Hayes, TSA commander, is second from the left. The commissary officer is using the famous and traditional ceremonial scissors that usually couldn't cut anything, but they were great for photos.

TSA photo, DeCA historical file





1986: FORT MEADE,

Maryland. Congressman Dan Daniel (inset photograph) shakes hands with employees during the grand opening. BELOW: Fort Meade's ultramodern appearance was quite an attention-grabber.

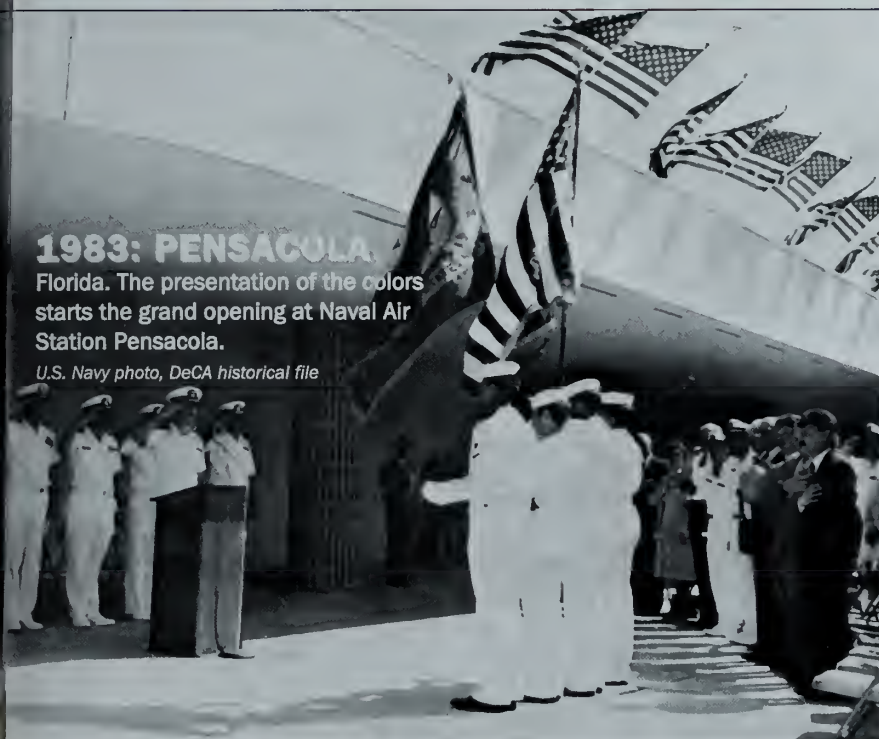
TSA photos, DeCA historical file



1983: PENSACOLA,

Florida. The presentation of the colors starts the grand opening at Naval Air Station Pensacola.

U.S. Navy photo, DeCA historical file



▲ 1988: YUMA PROVING GROUND,

Arizona. A cake festooned with the TSA seal was a sweet attraction for the first customers at this new commissary.

TSA photo, DeCA historical file



◀ 1983: FORT BENJAMIN HARRISON,

Indiana, January 12. Ron Renaud, representing TSA Midwest Region's commissary operations (fifth from left), poses with post and commissary personnel at the grand opening of this new store in Indianapolis.

U.S. Army photo: Earl Johnson, DeCA historical file



▲ **1993: EGLIN** Air Force Base, Florida, May 4. Bob Tate, DeCA director of operations (right) helps two officials cut the ribbon with what may be the largest oversized scissors ever used at a grand opening. DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt



▲ **1994: CARLISLE BARRACKS,** Pennsylvania, November 15. Maj. Gen. Richard Beale, DeCA director, meets some young patrons at the grand opening. DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt



1993: MINOT Air Force Base, North Dakota. Cashier Sherry Brock welcomes a friend's baby to the August grand opening. DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt

► **1995: OROTE,**

Guam, Sept. 14. There's never a lack of food at a commissary opening or at the pre-opening party the night before. These happy volunteers wait to serve guests at the buffet table.

DeCA photo: Sam Cagle





▲ **1993: MOGADISHU**, Somalia. Soldiers line up during the grand opening of the university tactical field exchange (TFE). During the U.S. deployment of troops to Somalia for Joint Task Force Provide Relief, DeCA arranged for logistics support and provided most of the people who ran several TFEs, while the Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) supplied most of the merchandise. The university TFE was located in a dilapidated room with only two thousand square feet of space, but it was open twelve hours a day, six days a week, and offered four hundred items. In an average week it served 4,550 customers, who spent \$110,000. DeCA photo courtesy Senior Master Sgt. Randy Eller



▲ **1997: FORT RILEY**, Kansas, April 29. The post commanding general's mounted guard, dressed in uniforms of the nineteenth century, attend the commissary grand opening ceremonies.

DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt

◀ **1994: FORT MYER**, Virginia, November 8. A German Oompa band entertains customers during the grand opening. DeCA photo: Sgt. 1st Class Derryl Fields



▲ 2005: LAJES FIELD,

the Azores, January 25. Shoppers at the grand reopening fill out entry blanks, hoping to win one of the vendor giveaways piled in a traditional Azorean wooden boat. (Gaivota is Portuguese for seagull—which explains the drawing of a bird under the boat's name.) The commissary at Lajes Field received a \$4.2-million renovation that gave the store a new ceiling, lights, floor, new shelving, freezers, and chill cases. This was the commissary's first upgrade in more than fifteen years. DeCA photo courtesy Lajes Field



▲ 2002: NEW RIVER, North Carolina.

Carrying on the tradition of having a big cake at grand opening, the new commissary at Marine Corps Air Station New River used a double decker, decorated with the familiar DeCA grocery cart. DeCA photo courtesy of New River commissary

► 2000: FORT BRAGG SOUTH,

North Carolina, August 15. Product mascots are always popular at grand openings. Despite the big eyes on this rooster, he needs a guide to help him around the store. Product mascots are long on cleverness but a little short on visibility and ventilation inside the costume. DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt

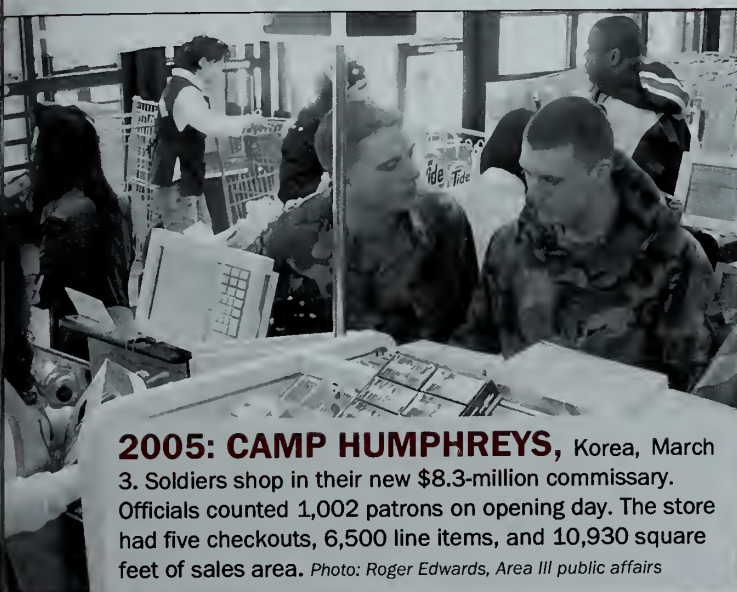




◀ 2004: KUNSAN,

Korea, June 16. The entrance to the new commissary shows the decorations associated with festivities of a grand opening. At this store, unaccompanied airmen received a new \$5.7-million commissary with 6,849 line items and 15,400 square feet of sales area.

DeCA photo: Nancy O'Neill



2005: CAMP HUMPHREYS, Korea, March 3. Soldiers shop in their new \$8.3-million commissary. Officials counted 1,002 patrons on opening day. The store had five checkouts, 6,500 line items, and 10,930 square feet of sales area. Photo: Roger Edwards, Area III public affairs



▲ **2000: AVIANO** Air Base, Italy, November, 7. Festivities completed, the opening-day crowd surges out of the parking lot to get a taste of their new store. They found a facility covering 60,800 square feet, with a 29,500-square-foot sales floor, twelve checkouts, and 10,563 line items. Within four years, it would twice win the award as the "Best Large Commissary Outside the United States."

DeCA photo: Gerri Young

◀ **2002 KINGS BAY,** Georgia, November. Base and commissary officials cheer the cutting of the ribbon, officially reopening the store at Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay after an extensive renovation. Jim Carnes (center), store director, jubilantly holds up a piece of the ribbon. Scott Simpson, at the time DeCA's Eastern Region director, is at far right. The lady with the flag is then-cashier Leonara Mills; she is currently a management support center clerk. The naval officer is Capt. John Cohoon, base commander.

U.S. Navy photo: Petty Officer 2nd Class John Anton



1997: FORT RILEY,
Kansas. Hundreds of balloons
helped create a festive and
patriotic atmosphere at the
grand opening in April.

DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt

"The end of a long, arduous journey." — Maj. Gen. John P. Dreska, referring to DeCA's formation.

11

STRENGTHENING 1991 - 1999 THE BENEFIT

SO IT WAS THAT the new organization—the consolidated commissary agency for which many people had worked so hard—was officially in operation as of October 1, 1991. As its director, Maj. Gen. John P. Dreska, said at the time, that date marked “the end of a long, arduous journey for some of us, and the beginning of new challenges for all” commissary personnel. Indeed, these challenges began a new era for commissary employees and customers alike.

Ceremonies at commissaries worldwide included opening-day parties, ribbon-cuttings, vendor giveaways, brass bands, and big sales. The hoopla nonplussed some customers, who didn’t understand why there was a grand opening for the same store they’d been patronizing all along. To the agency’s credit, the transition to DeCA had gone largely unnoticed by most shoppers.

The next sixteen years would be filled with activity at all levels. The agency would confront numerous and varied attempts at privatization. Several major reorganizations would be aimed at making the agency more cost-effective and streamlined. Many bases on which stores were located would be closed due to base realignment and closure (BRAC), budgetary, and other considerations, and the stores usually closed with them. Many building and renovation projects would start, and while most of them

saw fruition, others would fall by the wayside, overcome by events. Overall, among people outside the agency, there would be a gradual, growing recognition of the importance of the commissary benefit to military families' quality of life.

THE FIRST DIRECTOR

All of the agency's directors had approaches to their jobs that were unique and distinctive. Since each arrived at a different point in the agency's development, each

had different challenges to face and priorities to meet. The first, Army Maj. Gen. John P. Dreska (1990-1992), had been tasked with assembling the agency within a short period of time. Dreska was the director of the Defense Construction Supply Center in Columbus, Ohio, a branch of the Defense Logistics Agency, when he was selected as the first DeCA director. Showing solid leadership, he retained a positive, can-do spirit throughout a very tough formative period.

Seals, Symbols, and Slogans

EVERY NEW military organization adopts symbols and seals that are recognizable and build esprit d' corps, and DeCA was no exception.

In 1990, the DeCA Transition Team adopted the slogan "Quality First, People Always" for the new agency. There had been some debate over the slogan; some team members preferred "People First, Quality Always." In the end, Maj. Gen. John P. Dreska, DeCA's first director and the ultimate approving authority, chose the former to emphasize that the organization always thought about its employees and customers, while "job one" was the quality of products sold, together with the quality of customer service DeCA provided.

The team asked Cordell Hopper, chief of the graphics shop at the U.S. Army's Troop Support Agency at Fort Lee, to develop preliminary designs for an agency seal. Hopper provided the team with four designs, complete with suggested colors. The team filed all four with the U.S. Army's Institute of Heraldry at Cameron Station, Alexandria, Virginia. The institute, in turn, devised a seal based upon cues from Hopper's designs.

All major features in the seal as eventually approved came from Hopper: the use of the agency name and slogan; colors that signified the Defense Department and the four major services; and an encircling band that signified the Department of Defense. A shield was divided into three sections, each bearing a distinctive crest: a bald eagle, symbolic of the United States and its military; a sun and compass, symbolic of the agency's worldwide service; and a cornu-



copia, the traditional symbol of food in abundance. The institute placed the cornucopia standing up rather than depicting the more common version, tipped forward, food spilling out, because it was a more distinctive rendering and provided balance to the overall effect. Sprigs of oak and laurel at the base symbolized strength and honorable, distinguished service.

In heraldic terms, the shield and motto were emblazoned in gold and inscribed on a white disk within a medium azure (light blue)

Dreska oversaw the merger of four disparate, somewhat parochial agencies into one “purple” agency, and fostered a new attitude among employees to view themselves as DeCA people rather than employees of one of the individual services. He achieved remarkable success, and his biggest challenge proved to be the integration of multiple communications systems, including store operating systems and personnel systems at the headquarters and regions. In fact, it was because of the com-

circular band edged in gold, and inscribed “Defense Commissary Agency” in sable (black) at the top. Medium azure is traditionally associated with the Department of Defense and its agencies; gold denotes excellence, sable (black) stands for abundance, and red indicates courage and zeal. The colors are also associated with the Air Force (light blue), Army (green, red and gold), Marines (red and gold), and Navy (light blue).

The transition team approved this design shortly after receiving it from the institute in May 1991.

A new requirement materialized soon after DeCA’s activation in October 1991. The agency’s various business partners began inquiring whether they could use the official seal in their promotional publications and displays. Since official seals are not used for such purposes, DeCA developed an alternative logo for non-official uses. Michael Cerny, a graphic artist who worked for Hopper, designed a stylized grocery cart, forming the letters *d*, *e*, *c*, and *a*. The symbol has become informally known simply as the DeCA Cart. Inside the cart were much the same items that filled the cornucopia in the official seal. Otherwise, the two symbols were, and remain, separate and distinct.



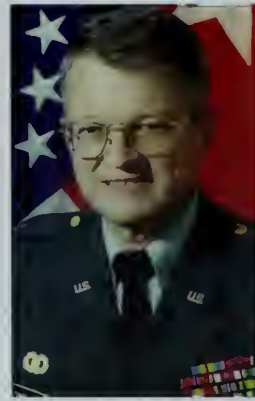
plexities associated with the integration of the business systems that bill paying emerged to become the new agency’s first challenge.

Whatever new difficulties the agency faced, the commissary mission remained essentially the same as it had been years before DeCA was formed: to deliver the benefit to service members and their families efficiently and effectively, improving their quality of life through the best possible prices on grocery and household items. Over the years, the realities that made the commissary mission increasingly difficult also remained the same: the threats of privatization and downsizing, and the closure of bases with stores where retirees made up a large portion of the patron base.

SLOGAN, SEAL, AND TWO BILLS OF RIGHTS

By the time the agency became operational, an official slogan and seal had already been selected and designed. The DeCA seal incorporated a cornucopia, the traditional symbol of plenty; an eagle, the symbol for America’s military; and a combined sun, star, and compass, the symbol of worldwide operations. The agency slogan, “Quality First, People Always,” conveyed the message DeCA would make quality its top priority, both in levels of service and in the excellence of the goods it sold, and it would always take care of the people involved, be they customers, employees, or business partners.

Concern for both the customer and the employee was evident in the establishment of DeCA’s Customer Bill of Rights and Employee Bill of Rights, both of which were published by opening day (*see photograph, page 345*). The customer version stated that customers had the right to expect professional, courteous service; a clean, pleasant store; fresh, high-quality merchandise; well-



Maj. Gen.
John P. Dreska

stocked shelves, the best possible prices; and quick, efficient checkout. The employee version stated employees had the right to expect fair and equal treatment, to challenge work processes with new ideas, to express their views and have them fairly considered, to put quality first, and to feel true pride in their workmanship.

BY THE NUMBERS

The total number of stores DeCA owned and operated was 411. Including two Air Force troop issue facilities in Greenland and seventeen NEXMARTS supported by DeCA (but owned by NEXCOM), the total was sometimes given as 430 locations.

Over the next sixteen years, ninety-one new stores were built, most of them replacements for obsolete facilities, and dozens more were remodeled. Meanwhile, stores at 170 locations were closed due to BRAC actions, budgetary cutbacks, and military realignments.

When the agency was activated, DeCA had twenty-two thousand employees. Over the next fifteen years that number dropped to about eighteen thousand as stores and distribution centers closed, regions and region headquarters merged, and the agency headquarters downsized.

THE EARLY ORGANIZATION: 1991-1993

DeCA’s headquarters was located on Fort Lee, Virginia. Its command section consisted of the agency director, a deputy to the director (two years later, this title changed to chief executive officer), a chief of staff, an aide-de-camp, a senior enlisted advisor, an executive officer, and administrative support staff.

The headquarters organization originally consisted of a legislative liaison office (located in the Pentagon, to maintain close contact with DoD and Congress); five direct support offices (general counsel, inspector general, internal review, program management, and public affairs); and seven directorates (acquisition management,

WRATH of Andrew

IN 1945, BEFORE HURRICANES had names, a big one slammed into Homestead Air Force Base, Florida, doing such damage that the base was closed down until late 1955. Later, forty-seven years after the first storm, history repeated itself. On August 24, 1992, Hurricane Andrew, a Category 5 storm, leveled Homestead, which again was forced to close.

No one was more familiar with Homestead's commissaries than Cal Mullins, who had spent eighteen years there—nine as an NCO in the 1950s and '60s, and nine more as the civilian commissary officer in the 1970s, '80s, and '90s. He had also served as commissary officer at Nellis Air Force Base, where he and his staff won AFCOMS' Best Large CONUS Commissary award in 1987. Other assignments had included commissary store officer duties at Lowry Air Force Base, Colorado, and Yongsan, Korea; operations supervisor at the Ramey Air Base store, Puerto Rico; troop support duties at Sondrestrom and Thule, Greenland, and Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama; the director of operations at AFCOMS' Northwest Region; and an assignment as the 8th Air Force's commissary specialist. But it was the crucible of Hurricane Andrew was his ultimate test.

Mullins remembers it all too well. "We had opened the commissary early on the 23rd to give our customers a chance to stock up for the hurricane we knew was coming. We'd been open only two hours when the base commander told me to close and secure the store, get all my employees off the base, and advise everyone to seek shelter."

Although there was a sense of urgency in the order, Mullins decided to ride out the storm in his house a few miles from the base. Having been through four hurricanes previously, he was confident all would be well. About half of his neighbors did not share that confidence and left the area. He relaxed in his home watching television to keep up with the news on the hurricane until 12 midnight, when the power went off. The wind wasn't blowing too badly yet, so he went to bed, but that was the end of his relaxing. He was awakened by strong winds and blowing rain around 3 or 4 in the morning. The wind got stronger and the house shook, so he went into the hallway in the center of the house. Then the eye of the storm passed over, and all was calm for about thirty minutes.

When the storm resumed, the winds were "hard enough to scare me out of my wits," Mullins said. He sought shelter in a closet, but got soaked from water pouring down from the ceiling. He thought the house was going to be blown away. The wind and noise continued for an hour or so, and when it stopped, he "gave thanks to the Lord for seeing me through." The house had sustained major damage. The winds had reached 140 mph, and some gusts probably had far exceeded that figure. Amazingly, his telephone worked for about four hours after the hurricane, and though it then went dead, it came back on by the end of the day. "I gave Curt Day (at DeCA's Southern Region) as much news as I could at the time, but I wasn't aware yet that Homestead Air Force Base had been destroyed!"

He soon found out. The Homestead community, covering an area of approximately forty square miles, was obliterated. Many families had lost everything. Mullins says today, "It was the worst hurricane I've ever seen. I'd gone through several before, but never a Category 5." The



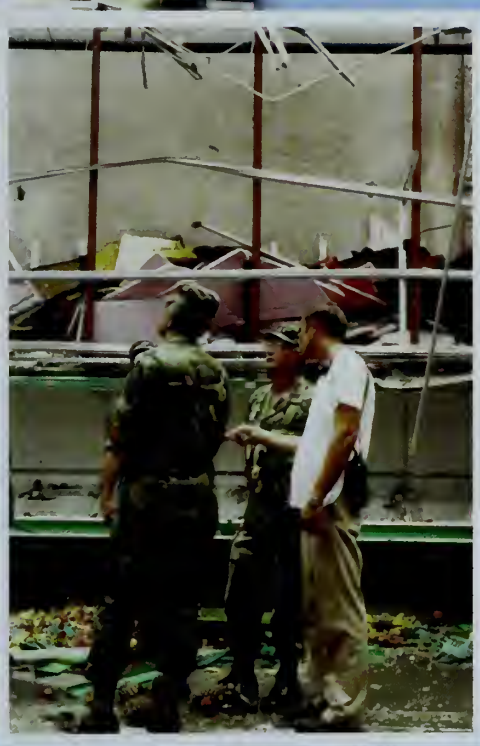
commissary had been severely damaged. Much of the roof was gone, a lot of product was ruined, water seemed to be everywhere, and the convenience annex, attached to the main store, had been wiped out.

Maj. Mike Droll, commissary officer at Patrick Air Force Base, arrived the next day with several Air Force personnel and began organizing a cleanup and salvage operation. What was left of the store and its warehouse was turned into a subsistence distribution center (SDC) by a group under the direction of Army Capt. Michelle Woods of DeCA's Southern Region. They collected twenty-two truckloads of undamaged retail items and shipped them to MacDill Air Force Base. Meanwhile, B- and T-rations were shipped in, and Woods' team helped set up field kitchens to feed troops, military families, and anyone else in the area needing food. "There were no hot meals unless you visited one of the community field kitchens on the base every day or so," Mullins remembers. Army units from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and Fort Drum, New York, arrived at Homestead to assist in the cleanup and the assistance effort, drawing rations for themselves, the military community, and thousands of area civilians.

DeCA's troop subsistence and readiness division, under Air Force Col. James H. Scott, DeCA's Midwest Region commander at Kelly Air Force Base, Texas, assumed operational control of what was left of the Homestead store and its warehouse. Scott activated the emergency operations center (EOC) at Kelly and assigned a crisis action team



CAL MULLINS was Homestead's commissary officer when Andrew struck. Photos: Courtesy Cal Mullins



DAMAGE ASSESSMENT. Maj. Gen. John P. Dreska (center) DeCA director, tours the destruction at Homestead.

DeCA photo: Staff Sgt. Derryl Fields

(CAT) to work the issues and assemble a team from all DeCA regions to run the SDC over the long haul. Air Force Maj. Carl Schwetz from DeCA Headquarters arrived as troop issue subsistence officer, and Senior Master Sgt. Eric Swayzee was the NCOIC of the SDC warehouse. Red Horse engineers from Hurlburt Field, Florida, helped restore the facility to workable condition and repaired the commissary warehouse. After three weeks, forty-seven thousand military and civilians in the Homestead area were being fed by the SDC operation.

Years later, Swayzee recalled that uniformed DeCA personnel, working around the clock, supplied military units, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and local charitable organizations with food, water, ice, and health and hygiene products. "Besides preparing hot meals for displaced civilians and for military personnel assisting with the cleanup, we also gave damaged but usable products from the commissary to support area residents who were living in camps, and to the local SPCA, which cared for lost pets and injured animals. We provided food, pet food, candy, and health and beauty care items."

Mullins got personal help as well. Don Rader, MacDill's commissary officer, and sales rep Dick Phillips, bought plywood decking in Tampa for Mullins' roof, and brought it to his house on a borrowed truck.

"They brought their own canned food, and set up camp with me in my house. They helped replace the roof decking, and covered the roof with tar paper." Don Duvall, an old Air Force friend, was another who came to help.

About a week or so after the hurricane, Maj. Gen. John P. Dreska, agency director, and DeCA's Southern Region director, John McGowan, arrived at Homestead to survey the damage. Mullins remembers that when the general saw him, he "came over and gave me a big bear hug, and John McGowan followed suit. That was a big morale boost for me, knowing that they empathized."

The most amazing sight in the store was Mullins' office. Everything on the desk was in place; papers were still stacked in the In and Out baskets, and photos on the wall were undisturbed. "But if you looked up," Mullins remembers, "there wasn't anything except the clear blue sky; there was no roof over the office." It was an outstanding example of Mother Nature's capriciousness.

Homestead was resurrected a few years later as a Guard/Reserve base, and the commissary was turned into an AAFES-run BX mart. Meanwhile, Mullins became commissary officer at Naval Station Mayport. While he was there, his store was named the region's best small store for three straight years and won the National Frozen Food Association's Golden Penguin Award in 1994. Then he moved to Korea as a deputy zone manager and the commissary officer at Yongsan, and later spent a year at the Eastern Region's Southern Area office at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. He retired in 2000 after 25 years of civilian service with the commissaries and over 21 years in uniform, 19 of which had been with the commissaries.

In 2005, there was some discussion of converting the Homestead store to a full-service commissary to serve the Guard and Reserves. By 2007, the Commissary Operating Board (soon to be the Board of Directors) decided that the best approach would be to open a new commissary

for the U.S. Southern Command in Miami, while AFFES would turn the old Homestead commissary into a full-scale exchange.

— Portions of the preceding feature were taken from an article written by Sgt. First Class Derryl Fields in 1992. Cal Mullins' personal reminiscences were related to Dr. Peter Skirbunt in 2005.

facilities, information resource management, operations, personnel and training, plans and analysis, and resource management). The facilities directorate's design and construction division was located in San Antonio, Texas, in offices attached to the Lackland Air Force Base commissary. Over the next sixteen years, the organization was subject to a great deal of adjustment and office name changes. (*For comparative organizational diagrams of 1991 and 2007, see Appendix 10.*)

REGIONS, DISTRICTS, AND DISTRIBUTION CENTERS

As originally established, DeCA's seven regions were to be largely autonomous. They included staff functional offices that constituted scaled-down versions of their headquarters counterparts. They were to provide technical advice, training, and direction for retail and troop issue functions at all locations under their jurisdiction. Region office staff members were also to act as liaison for DeCA headquarters with all commissaries and installation

commanders within the region. Region offices were located at Marine Corps Air Station El Toro, California (Southwest Region); Fort Lewis, Washington (Northwest/Pacific); Fort Meade, Maryland (Northeast); Kelly Air Force Base, Texas (Midwest); Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek, Virginia (Central Region); Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama (Southeast); and Ramstein Air Base, Germany (European).

Several regions had district offices to assist in communications with locations remote from the region headquarters. By 2005, reorganizations and store closures enabled DeCA to function with just three regions: DeCA East (with headquarters at Fort Lee), DeCA West (at McClellan Air Force Base, California), and DeCA Europe (Kapaun Air Station, Germany).

Also, in 1991, there were twenty central distribution centers (CDCs) located throughout the world. These were meant to enhance customer service by providing store locations with fast, cost-effective delivery of merchandise as needed. This was especially valuable with perishable and

semi-perishable goods. The CDCs purchased and stocked grocery items not yet available to stores through frequent or direct-store delivery methods, and they could often make same-day deliveries.

Originally, fourteen CDCs were located in the continental United States, one in Panama, one in the Pacific, and four in Europe, including three in central Germany and one in the United Kingdom.

FREQUENT DELIVERY

The CDC concept proved to be transitional. Within a few years, the agency later transitioned to a frequent delivery system, which was becoming the industry standard. This enabled most CONUS stores to get a forty-eight-hour turnaround (from the time the order was placed to the distributor, to the moment the item appeared on the shelf), something that had been unheard of just a decade previously. Where it was feasible, frequent or "Just in Time" delivery, by which products arrived at stores literally just in time to satisfy customer demand, made CDCs obsolete in the United States, though they continued to operate at overseas locations.

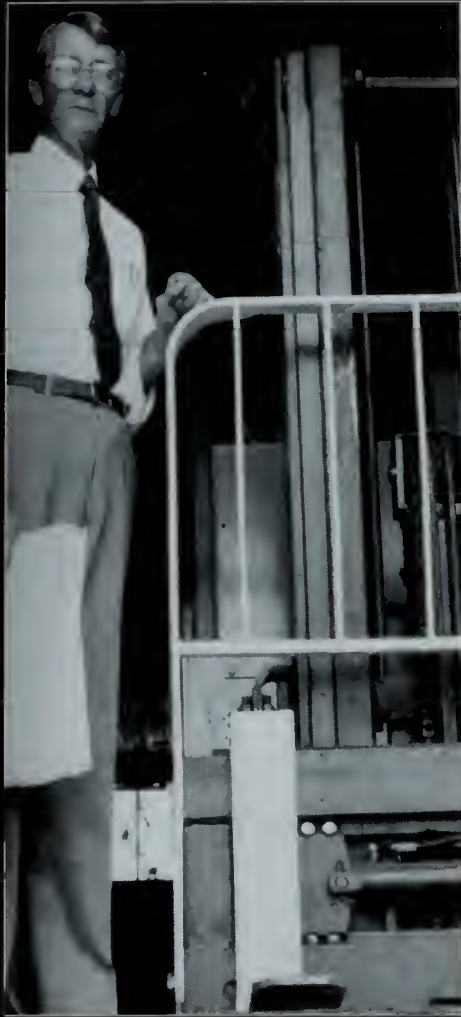
SERVICE CENTERS AND 'DECA WASHINGTON'

Two service centers were established in 1991 to handle financial matters: the East Service Center, originally located inside the DeCA headquarters building, later moved to rented space just off post at Fort Lee; and the West Service Center, co-located with the Midwest Region headquarters in the old AFCOMS headquarters building on Kelly Air Force Base. These centers provided accounting services including bill payment, payments for official travel, the DeCA merchandise coupon program, and the civilian payroll liaison function.

Like its predecessors, DeCA found it expedient to establish an office in Washington to act as an on-site liaison with the Defense Department, Congress, and other governmental agencies, departments, and offices. Essentially, DeCA's legislative liaison office (LL), which later was also called "the DeCA Washington Office," interfaced with congressional and DoD



DeCA's European Region Headquarters. When DeCA was established in 1991, it had seven regional headquarters. Europe's headquarters, which was originally located at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, was responsible for commissaries in the Azores, Belgium, Egypt, Germany, Iceland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Turkey, and the United Kingdom. It also ran four central distribution centers, three in Germany and one in the UK. In 1993, the headquarters relocated to this building at Kapaun Air Station, Germany (shown here as it appeared in 2003), where it has since remained. *DeCA photo: Gerri Young*



1992: TIDEWATER CDC. CLOCKWISE, TOP RIGHT: Joseph Green uses a yard tractor to tow a train of loaded carts up an 80-foot ramp onto a shipping dock at the Tidewater CDC. BOTTOM RIGHT: Darryl Rivers, materials handler supervisor, loads carts of merchandise for a local commissary. LEFT: Frank Wagenbrenner, manager of the Tidewater Central Distribution Center. DeCA photos: Sgt. 1st Class Derryl Fields

staff members, other government offices, and industry and trade associations in the Washington, D.C., area. Originally located in the Pentagon's E-ring, fifth corridor, it later moved to the E-ring's second corridor.* The office provided the DeCA command section and the chairman of the Defense Commissary Board (later called the Commissary Operating Board) with information on the status of proposed legislation and the state of executive and legislative political environments. Heads of the liaison office have been Air Force Col. Terry Fowler (1991-92), Army Lt. Col. E. J. Vincent (1992-1993), and Dan Sclater, a longtime commissary civilian employee,

who has led the office since Vincent's retirement.

TQM

Total Quality Management (TQM) was a business approach popular in the early 1990s that emphasized total customer satisfaction and continuous process improvement through four phases: assessment, planning, implementation, and institutionalization. Dreska enthusiastically endorsed the approach, and believed the principles of TQM should become DeCA's own guiding principles.

Encouraged by Dreska's support, the agency's chief of quality improvement,

Steve Randol, emphasized that management needed to focus on producing a quality product to satisfy its customers. Those customers were not only the paying patrons in the store, they were also the people within the organization who needed information or assistance.

In short, TQM put common sense into practice. There was nothing magical about it; it was simply good planning and hard work. It was also a way of emphasizing getting "back to basics" as to what business activities were all about: a team of people combining their skills to produce a quality product that would keep customers coming back for more.

*— The original LL office occupied space in the outermost (E) ring, down the hall from where a hijacked jet, American Airlines flight 77, would slam into the Pentagon during the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. The old office escaped the crash and explosion, but was severely damaged by water from firefighting efforts. Fortunately, because there had been an ongoing renovation to the building long prior to 9/11/01, DeCA had already moved its personnel to another section of the Pentagon, so the DeCA staff—and their records—remained unscathed.

COAST GUARD STORES: Varied and Distinguished

THE COAST GUARD'S commissaries have been mentioned only occasionally in these pages, primarily because that service was never an arm of the War, Navy, or Defense Departments. Originally it was the Revenue Cutter Service; over the years it was assigned to the Treasury, Commerce, and Transportation Departments. As of 2007 it belonged to the Department of Homeland Security.*

Over the years, the Coast Guard assimilated the Lighthouse Service, the Steamboat Inspection Service, the Bureau of Navigation, and the Lifesaving Service. With such a pedigree, it's not surprising that Coast Guard retailers did not conduct business in the same way as their Defense Department counterparts.

By the 1980s, the Coast Guard's exchanges and commissaries were run by its nonappropriated fund activity management division in Washington, D.C. In 1991, to distinguish it from the other services' retail activities, the office was renamed the Coast Guard Exchange System.

Before 1991, most of the Coast Guard's grocery sales took place in buildings consisting of a grocery section inside an exchange operation; in contrast, commissaries on Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine installations were usually stand-alone operations, separate and distinct from the exchanges even when located in the same shopping mall.

Navy stores sometimes blurred the distinction, because its commissaries and exchanges were run by the same organizations. Some of these so-called "location stores" are still run by the Navy Exchange Service Command (NEXCOM) today. The Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) also placed grocery sections in some of their exchange buildings.

For other services these were the exceptions, but the Coast Guard had many such locations. Some Coast Guard commissary sections were as big as the other services' stand-alone stores. At the time DeCA was formed, the Coast Guard had combined exchanges and commissaries at Aquadilla, Puerto Rico; Cape Cod, Massachusetts; Cape May, New Jersey; Cleveland, Ohio; Elizabeth City, New Jersey; Miami/Opa Locka, Florida; Mobile, Alabama; North Bend, Oregon; Port Angeles, Washington; Portsmouth, Virginia; St. Petersburg, Florida; Traverse City, Michigan; Warrenton, Oregon; and Yorktown, Virginia.

After 1980, only three Coast Guard comstores resembled their counterparts in the other services, and two eventually joined DeCA. The first, at Petaluma, California, closed in the late 1980s. The next was located at Governors Island, New York, just a short ferry ride from lower Manhattan. The third was on Kodiak Island, Alaska.

Site of one of America's oldest military installations, Governors

2005: KODIAK, Alaska. Opened in 1985 and taken under DeCA's wing in 1996, the store was co-located with the community center in a setting of Alaskan splendor, with mountains visible in the distance and the cold, clear waters of Woman's Bay just a few yards away. DeCA photo: Alan Skaw



Island was originally established in 1698 as the property of the British governor, and it remained the property of every Royal Governor until 1782.** In 1810-11 the United States Army built a post there and called it Fort Jay. That was the beginning of 155 years of an Army presence on the island. There was probably an Army commissary there as of 1867, as soon as legislation made it possible, but currently the earliest known store on the island dates from 1934. Its replacement, built in 1948, would remain in business for forty-eight years. In the middle of the approach to New York City's harbor and within sight of the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, and lower Manhattan, the stores at Governors Island probably had the most unique location, the most fascinating view, and the most historic surroundings of any commissary in history.

In 1966 the Coast Guard took control of the installation, and named it for the island on which it was located. The commissary did not change much during twenty-one years of Coast Guard management, but a few months after NAVRESSO assumed responsibility for the store in May 1987, the number of line items in the store more than doubled. After DeCA absorbed the store, the military drawdown at the end of the Cold War claimed Governors Island, and the installation and its commissary closed in August 1996.

The Kodiak facility, the only Coast Guard store operating under DeCA's direction as of 2007, was at the Coast Guard Integrated Support Command Kodiak, Alaska, in the Aleutian Islands. Historically, the base belonged first to the Army and then to the Navy, which gave the base to the Coast Guard in 1971. The station had a commissary by 1960, and the Coast Guard opened the present store in 1985. A decade later, the Department of Defense and the Transportation Department—which had assumed control of the Coast Guard in 1967—agreed it made good economic and logistical sense to have DeCA, which had six other stores in Alaska, assume operational control of the Kodiak store. This occurred on October 1, 1995. DeCA assumed responsibility for stock accountability a year later.

*— In times of declared war, or on direction of the president, the Coast Guard functions as part the Navy Department.

**— Therefore its name, Governors Island (with no apostrophe), indicated not a possessive, but a plural: that is, the island was named for its multiple owners.



2005: THE INTERIOR
of the Kodiak, Alaska, store.

DeCA photo: Alan Skaw

As of 1995, the Kodiak store had 11,000 total square feet and eight thousand line items. It served over eighteen hundred families and was housed in a four-story community center that included the exchange, credit union, post office, and several concessionaires. DeCA's man on the scene was deputy director (of resale activities) Roger Mallorca, who ran the commissary while the director ran the exchange. Mallorca was initially assigned three meat cutters and three cashiers. These were enough people to get the store started, and DeCA was in business in the Aleutians.

Business varies as the Coast Guard decommissions and replaces its cutters at the island, but the base population is expected to stabilize within the next few years. The Kodiak store, remodeled in 2005, today serves about thirteen hundred customers, including Coast Guard, National Guard, retirees, and their families.

The biggest problem, as might be expected, is that of supply. Although things are certainly better than they were a few decades ago, technology has not quite solved the supply problem. Freight comes in by ship from Seattle, by way of Anchorage, a journey that takes eighteen days in good weather. That makes obtaining fresh perishables prob-



GOVERNORS ISLAND, mid 1990s. The towers of the World Trade Center dominate the skyline of lower Manhattan in this photograph taken after the Cold War but before the events of September 11, 2001. The island's location encouraged commissary patrons all over the New York area to go grocery shopping by taking a ferry. The commissary was located in the left half of the large, gray building located next to the pier on the right. The exchange, various exchange vendors, and the receiving department were placed in the same building. *U.S. Coast Guard photo*

lematic, especially when the weather is uncooperative.

Sitting at the far end of a pipeline that's near the Arctic Circle, customers at Kodiak probably appreciate these efforts to bring them fresh, wholesome food in a modern, clean facility just a bit more than customers at most other locations.

1992: EL CENTRO. The store at Naval Aviation Facility El Centro, California, as it appeared in 1992. Built in 1966, it had two checkouts and 3,553 square feet. A new, modern store replaced it on November 19, 1996, with three checkouts and 3,300 square feet. Photo courtesy El Centro



EARLY BILL-PAYING ADJUSTMENTS

The effort to quickly and seamlessly consolidate four distinct ways of doing business proved to be not entirely unattainable in the time allocated for the transition. In the civilian sector, merging companies often keep their own identities—such as their corporate names or logos—along with internal procedures, while gradually phasing replacement operating systems into use. But DeCA did not have the luxury of being gradual; it needed to quickly “stand up” as one agency due to the requirement to submit a single agency budget for 1992. DeCA’s operating system, different from those of the four services’ commissary agencies, was unfamiliar to vendors and DeCA service center personnel alike, and the rapid consolidation did not allow adequate time for training in using the new system. Thus the need for haste created confusion, resulting in bill-paying delays threatening the agency’s credibility—if not its very existence.

Even as DeCA took control of commissary operations, it began accumulating a backlog of unpaid bills. The initial bill-paying process was laborious and required three shifts, six days per week, at each service center. Volunteers worked on Sundays as well. Every bill was to be forwarded for payment to the Defense Finance Accounting Service (DFAS) in Columbus, Ohio, but only after invoices and vouchers could

be matched to the penny—but this was often impossible, since most documents simply did not match. Hundreds of delayed payments resulted, and the agency soon found itself \$400 million in arrears. The new agency’s suppliers would be patient, but only to a point; smaller businesses, especially, could not afford to wait too long for payment.

The problem was initially addressed by using a streamlining “roll up” process. Groups of bills received from any one source in ten-to-fourteen-day time frames would be combined, or “rolled up,” without having to make exact matches between invoices and vouchers. Differentials of up to \$100 were allowed and reconciliation would be made later. Unfortunately, not everyone involved understood this or other corrective measures, and problems in reconciliation remained for some time.

FINE-TUNING THE PROCESS

The climax of the “bill-paying crisis” occurred on August 6, 1992, when Dreska was summoned before a hearing of the Senate’s Committee on Governmental Affairs Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Operations, which was inquiring into the bill-paying dilemma. A DeCA employee from the West Service Center in San Antonio, Texas, testified that her supervisors had, in effect, told her to falsify dates on invoices so DeCA would not be liable for interest under the Prompt

Payment Act. Blindsided by this testimony, Dreska nonetheless defused the hearing’s confrontational tone by responding that he was “appalled,” and promised a thorough investigation. The next day, DeCA’s general counsel and inspector general began a meticulous review of the entire bill-paying process. They found that the majority of DeCA’s employees were processing bills in the proper manner, but in a few instances some supervisors, primarily because of a lack of both training and understanding of the requirements, had directed employees to process bills in a manner inconsistent with law.

The bill-paying problem led to innovations that eventually improved the situation by automating and simplifying the entire process. A solution known as Delivery Ticket Invoicing (DTI) solved the difficulty in matching invoices to receipts. With DTI, the vendor simply had to place two extra pieces of data onto the original delivery ticket: the “remit to” address, and the terms of payment, such as “2-10-net 30.”* DeCA got approval to use the delivery tickets themselves as invoices (hence the name, “delivery ticket invoicing”), as long as it had each necessary data element required by DFAS to be considered an invoice. The process eliminated tedious, time-consuming steps at the store and at the supplier’s shipment point. Once the store placed the information from the delivery ticket into the system, payment would be made.

* — This example meant, “2 percent discount off the invoice price if paid within 10 days; otherwise, net payment required in 30 days.”

DTI was introduced to the stores in May 1993. Within a few months, DeCA was able to successfully integrate the services' four separate systems of bill-paying—"some as different as night and day," as one manager at the East Service Center said. This was arguably the most important of DeCA's accomplishments during its first year of operation. As Dreska had predicted, it had

proved to be the "long pole in the tent."

This was one of the biggest jobs ever undertaken by a Department of Defense agency. Years later, DeCA General Counsel Bill Sherman observed that given the start-up problems and lack of time to reconcile the services' four systems, the fact that DeCA had paid the bills down within a year of the agency's formation was "a remark-

able accomplishment."

Bill-paying adjustments had also prompted DeCA's adoption of the Standard Automated Voucher Examination System (SAVES). Like systems used in the civilian sector, it would enable payment on receipts and vouchers that were close to being a perfect match. Over-or-underpayments tended to balance out over a few



1992: VENDORS VISIT. Early in 1992, representatives from multiple vendors and manufacturers visited DeCA headquarters at Fort Lee, Virginia, for briefings on how the agency was attempting to deal with the backlog of bills. ABOVE PHOTO: Chet Boutelle, (third from right) who led DeCA's East Service Center, speaks to the visitors. To his right is Maj. Gen. John P. Dreska, DeCA director. Dreska repeatedly told employees and vendors alike that DeCA's bill-paying system was not difficult as long as everyone followed the guidance. The agency published a list of "ten commandments of bill-paying" that gave step-by-step instructions on how to use the system. LEFT: Boutelle and the vendors watch as one of DeCA's premier bill-payers, Linda Stahlman—who handled an average of 1,431 invoices daily—demonstrates the process.

DeCA photos: Ken Perrotte

weeks' time, and headway could then be made on the backlog. That's when the bill rollups enabled DeCA to conduct one transaction rather than fourteen, and was instrumental in getting the bill-payment problem under control.

The benefits and lessons learned from the bill-paying challenges were taking hold as DeCA celebrated its first anniversary. Shortly afterward, having completed the creation of the agency, and having seen it through its first year of operation, Dreska announced his retirement as DeCA director, officially effective January 1, 1993. Within a few days of his announcement, a change of command ceremony took place. Dreska was replaced by Army Maj. Gen. Richard E. Beale Jr., who would confront several difficult issues during his long tenure.

THE SECOND DIRECTOR

Army Maj. Gen. Richard E. Beale Jr. (1992-1999) was director of the Defense Personnel Support Center (DPSC) in Philadelphia prior to coming to DeCA. A thirty-one-year Army veteran, he would serve as DeCA's director for four years in a military capacity, and three more as a civilian director.

Throughout his tenure, he maintained an optimistic outlook and constantly sought ways to secure the benefit's future. The twin challenges he faced were those of having to cut costs due to dwindling funding—what he termed a “budget shortfall”—and the resultant, near-constant attacks and recommendations by those who favored privatizing commissaries.

He established a retiree council (it later became a customer council) which was in tune with what the customers needed and wanted, and what DeCA could supply in return. Members of the retiree council were particularly well-placed to be able to provide support in times of crisis or controversy.

Despite numerous obstacles, Beale succeeded in keeping the benefit intact. This



Maj. Gen.
Richard E. Beale Jr.

was no easy feat, and the very survival of the benefit is probably his greatest DeCA legacy.

THE TROOP SUPPORT MISSION

The Air Force's troop support mission, passed down to DeCA from AFSCMS, was the agency's modern link to early subsistence operations predating the advent of the modern sales commissary in 1867 and harkening all the way back to the Revolutionary War. Troop support of the Air Force and the other services as needed was originally considered DeCA's primary wartime mission. In 1991, a troop subsistence and readiness division was assigned to, and located in, the Midwest Region headquarters building. There it could make use of the recently constructed emergency operations center, which had been used by AFSCMS during the Gulf War (*see pp. 367-68*).

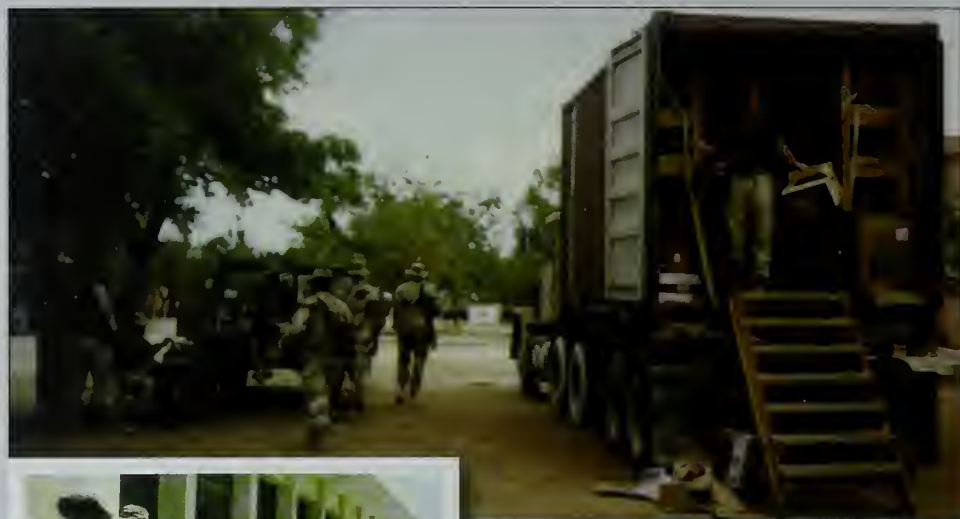
Mission in Somalia.

DeCA involvement in strife-torn Somalia began on October 15, 1992, when DeCA military personnel

established a tactical field exchange (TFE) in Mombasa, Kenya. This TFE assisted “Joint Task Force Provide Relief,” the United Nations humanitarian effort in Somalia. By January 1993, DeCA personnel were establishing TFEs in Somalia itself (*see feature, pp. 416-17*). A total of eighty DeCA military personnel served tours of duty either in Somalia itself or in support operations in Kenya and in Cairo, Egypt. Although DeCA's TFE mission succeeded, U.N. forces eventually withdrew as they were faced with a no-win situation. The last remaining DeCA personnel were withdrawn from Somalia in March 1994. No DeCA personnel were injured during their deployment in Somalia, though many came under fire.

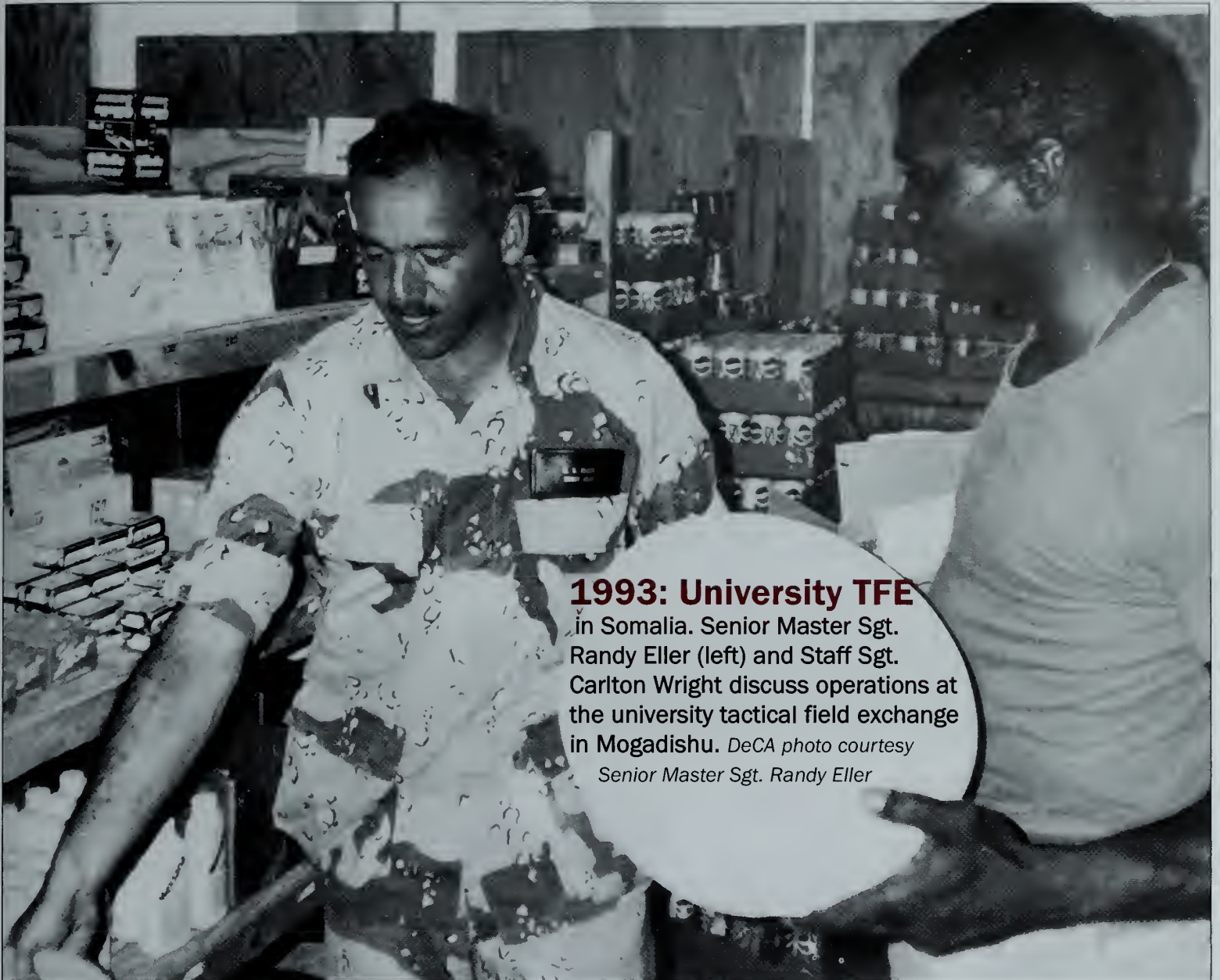
Subsequently, in response to requests from the services—which all needed more manpower—DeCA began planning to dramatically reduce its authorized military workforce from 1,849 to 18 by the end of 1996, and eliminate 384 slots used by the Navy for ship-to-shore-rotations. The agency would transfer its troop-support function to the Air Force Services Agency on October 1, 1995.

Mission in Haiti. But it would not happen immediately; there was still one



1993: TFE OPERATIONS in Somalia. The mobile tactical field exchange shown here is reminiscent of similar operations in World War I (*see pages 124-25*).
INSET: Soldiers line up to purchase items at the university TFE.

DeCA photos courtesy Senior Master Sgt. Randy Eller



1993: University TFE
in Somalia. Senior Master Sgt. Randy Eller (left) and Staff Sgt. Carlton Wright discuss operations at the university tactical field exchange in Mogadishu. DeCA photo courtesy Senior Master Sgt. Randy Eller

more mission to complete. In October 1994, almost two years to the day since DeCA personnel had gone to Kenya, a joint DeCA-AAFES tactical field exchange opened in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. It supported U.S. troops deployed there to keep the peace during unrest regarding the return of Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the elected president who had been forced by a military junta to flee Haiti. A second TFE soon opened in Cap-Haitien. Ultimately, DeCA assigned twenty personnel to the operations in Haiti, led by Capt. Clayton McAnally.

On October 1, 1995, a year after the deployment to Haiti, DeCA closed its troop subsistence and readiness (TS&R) division at the Midwest Region headquarters on Kelly Air Force Base, Texas, and its

Air Force troop support mission transferred to the Air Force Services Agency at Randolph Air Force Base, Texas. All civilian employees of the old TS&R division transferred with the mission. By that point, 340 DeCA military personnel had already been reassigned to the Air Force, with 163 more transferring before two more years had passed. Ultimately, this left DeCA with the primary mission of retail sales to eligible shoppers.

DPSC

The Defense Personnel Support Center (DPSC) in Philadelphia was responsible for purchasing many of the foodstuffs, including canned goods and supply bulletin items, for CONUS commissaries, as well as for shipments overseas. DPSC

transferred some of its commissary-related functions to DeCA in 1994, when the agency began taking over distribution centers, especially those that were overseas. Several others were closed. The supply bulletin was replaced by ROAs (resale ordering agreements). Delivery time to overseas locations was shortened, in some cases from ninety days "on the water" to less than thirty days, thanks to the advent of the DeCA Interim Business System and Direct Overseas Ordering and Receiving System (DIBS/DOORS). DeCA would eventually take over its own meat procurement, as well.

FINE-TUNING THE AGENCY

If there was anything about DeCA that was consistent in its early years, it was its will-

1981: CAMP FOSTER. This photo shows the interior of the huge, AFCOMS-run store. AFCOMS photo, DeCA historical file. **INSET:** The new Camp Foster store, opened in 1987, replaced the old Camp Butler store. It was named AFCOMS' best store in the Pacific in 1988 and 1989, and as the best large store in DeCA's Northwest/Pacific Region in 1992. DeCA photo



OKINAWA: Stores Deliver Benefit on the Island

AMERICAN BASES were scattered all over the Pacific after World War II. Key bases were located in Hawaii, Alaska, the Philippines, Guam, Taiwan, mainland Japan, South Korea, and on Okinawa in the Ryukyu Islands, south of Japan.

To Americans, Okinawa was as emotionally important as it was strategically valuable. The final prize of the Pacific island-hopping campaign, it had been a hard-won piece of ground. Fierce resistance on the island, along with hundreds of kamikazes in the air, had taken an awful toll on U.S. forces before Okinawa was finally secured.

Shortly after war's end, when families were allowed to accompany American servicemen on overseas tours, many Pacific bases were provided with commissaries of some sort, from Quonset huts to Japan's commissary trains (*see feature, chapter 7*). As the Cold War continued and families went to the Far East and the Pacific in ever-increasing numbers, they found bigger and better commissaries waiting to serve them. The stores at the installations on Okinawa were no exceptions.

In the first three decades after the war, Okinawa had commissaries at Kadena and Naha air bases, Makiminato Air Station, and the Army's

post at Sukiran.* The Army ran the island's supply depot and, consequently, all the commissaries except Kadena, from 1946 to 1974. After that, the Army's presence gradually dwindled. The Marines began taking over the old Army posts, while the Air Force began providing semi-perishable and troop support items in 1976, and took control of the island's supply depot (the predecessor of today's central distribution center) in 1978.

The Air Force handled logistics for materiel and subsistence through its base at Kadena. It was therefore logical that the Air Force become the single service manager for all commissaries on the island. When four new commissaries were constructed for the Marines in the 1980s, it was done under AFCOMS supervision. A new store also opened at Kadena in 1981. Construction of a new store that opened at Camp Foster (replacing the old Camp Butler store) in 1987 was funded by surcharge. Meanwhile, the stores at Camp Courtney (1988) and Camp Kinser** (1990) were funded primarily by the Japanese government's facility improvement funds, though surcharge monies were used for some of the equipment.

* — Known as Sukiran in the 1940s and 1950s, this post became known as Zukeran in the 1960s, and Fort Butler, Fort Buckner, and Camp Butler in the 1970s and 1980s. AFCOMS took responsibility for its commissary in March 1977. This store was replaced by a new AFCOMS store (this time for the Marines) at neighboring Camp Foster in 1990.

** — Camp Kinser was the former Makiminato [AKA Machinato] Air Station, the commissary for which had been a branch of the Sukiran/Fort Buckner/Camp Foster store, and had been run by both the Army and the Air Force. The new store was built in an existing building that was converted to a commissary.

1984: The Makiminato Air Station store shown here during “the year of the family.” The store was run first by the Army, then by AFCOMS. The AFCOMS “Smart Owl” is evident here. The store closed in 1987 when the housing area it served was returned to the Japanese government.

AFCOMS photo, DeCA historical file



▲ **1990: MARINE COL.** Dennis E. Damon (left), chief of staff at Camp Butler, and Brig. Gen. George R. Christmas, commanding officer at Camp Kinser, greet Air Force Col. Jim Scott, AFCOMS' Pacific Region Director, during the Camp Kinser store grand opening.

AFCOMS photo, DeCA historical file



1984: KADENA, Air Base, Okinawa. The store shown here had opened in 1981. The building featured wide-span construction, keeping it free from the structural posts common in stores prior to the 1980s. AFCOMS photo, DeCA Historical File



◀ **2004: THE STORE**

at Camp Kinser opened in 1990. DeCA photo courtesy Camp Kinser commissary



1988: CAMP COURTNEY grand opening in May. A Marine Corps officer addresses the crowd while the AFCOMS commissary officer looks on. The government of Japan funded this store's construction.

AFCOMS photo, DeCA historical file

1984: BUILDING NUMBER 1 at the Okinawa Central Distribution Center. This facility operated a full seventeen years before DeCA would try the CDC concept worldwide.

AFCOMS photo, DeCA historical file



The new stores on the Marine bases proved to be special. The largest was at Camp Foster, with twelve checkouts and 26,207 square feet of sales floor. Camp Kinser's commissary, with eight checkouts and a 13,750-square-foot sales floor, was named AFCOMS' best large store in the Pacific in 1988 and 1989, and in 1997 was named the agency's best large store in the Northwest/Pacific Region. The Camp Courtney store, similar to the Kinser store (13,635-square-foot sales floor, eight checkouts), was named DeCA's best large store in its region in 1994 and 1995, and took the prize as the best overseas small store in 1995.

When Air Force Col. Jim Scott, commander of AFCOMS' Pacific Region, attended the grand

opening of the Camp Kinser store in March 1990, he noted, “The close proximity of the stores on Okinawa allows for the operation of a central dis-

tribution center. We're keeping better in-stock rates and a much wider selection of product than if each store were to requisition and store its own merchandise.” The Marine commanding general at Camp Butler, then-Brig. Gen. Robert D. Johnston, praised the joint-service effort: “A spirit of cooperative teamwork between the Marines and AFCOMS has created an atmosphere of professionalism and customer satisfaction.”

Okinawa was, in effect, a preview of the cooperation that would be shown by all services during the consolidation into DeCA. Today, commissaries remain at Camps Courtney, Foster, and Kinser, and Kadena Air Base. A central distribution center is still active at Camp Kinser.

ingness to experiment and its persistent efforts to fine-tune itself. To lead this process, in 1994 Beale created an advisory panel known as the savings analysis group (SAG, which was alternately referred to as the savings assessment group and the strategic action group). Led by DeCA's chief of staff, Army Col. Michael Koch, the SAG identified ways of reducing costs, particularly in appropriated funds. Initiatives it developed were expected to

yield millions of dollars in savings. Within a year, the SAG evolved into the new office of corporate research. At the same time, the formation of the provisional operations support center, under Director of Operations Bob Tate, was DeCA's first attempt to improve performance by combining several directorates into one team.

The provisional operations support center was placed outside the gate at Fort Lee in Hopewell, Virginia, across the street

from DeCA's East Service Center. As originally conceived, the center would include the facilities directorate and six business units (acquisition, analysis and reconciliation, information technology, management, marketing, and transportation). In practice, the facilities directorate remained attached to headquarters, and in later years the business units would evolve in different directions to become semi-autonomous entities.

At store level, in 1994 DeCA initiated a

1993: 'MY BENEFIT!' Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Edwin Dorn (second from right) listens to an unidentified customer talk about the Fort Benning, Georgia, commissary. She explained that she lived more than twenty miles from the commissary, but she made the drive because the commissary was "her store, her benefit, and she appreciated the low prices and wide variety of merchandise." Pictured second from left is store director Larry J. Bentley. To the right is Frank Norton, a member of Dorn's staff.

Photo courtesy Fort Benning TASC



1990s: LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA.

Located near Los Angeles International Airport, Los Angeles Air Force Base is in one of the highest-priced urban areas in the continental United States. In 1979, Air Force Space Command requested a commissary be built there to help offset the loss of discretionary income due to exorbitant housing costs. When it opened in 1983, it won an Air Force Design Merit Award. Later, as it underwent several renovations, the store maintained its modern lines and futuristic look; in fact, the look was more than skin-deep. The scheduled installation of solar panels on its roof would enable it to power some of its refrigeration units by mid-2008. This was the commissaries' important first step in utilizing this emerging technology. The covered exit shown here (the entrance is out of view on the left) has reminded some shoppers of the "transporters" from a certain well-known science-fiction television program. Customers for now, at least, still need to arrive and leave by Earthbound vehicle.

DeCA photo courtesy facilities directorate



zone concept to provide more localized management support of the stores. Several stores in close geographic proximity made up each zone. Presiding over each zone was a zone manager, a person who answered to the region headquarters and worked out of the main store within the zone. Originally there were thirty-two zones, including three in Europe and four in the Pacific.

DeCA GOES CORPORATE

The Defense Commissary Board (DCB), DeCA's first governing body, was responsible to the assistant secretary of defense for production and logistics (ASD/P&L) as an advisory forum for discussion of commissary issues. In 1991, this person was Colin McMillan, the man to whom Dreska and the agency reported.

The board originally consisted of the DeCA director, who served as chairman; a representative of the assistant secretary of defense (force management and personnel); a representative of the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff; one military officer and one enlisted representative from each of the military services (not including the Coast Guard), appointed by the secretaries of the military departments; and other representatives invited by the DeCA director.

The board's objective was to enhance patron service and ensure that a financially solvent, responsive system was maintained to benefit commissary patrons. It was to exchange information between DeCA and the military departments, and make recommendations on policies and programs. It provided advice on funding and recommended priorities for the commissary construction program. The Defense Department later replaced the Defense Commissary Board with a new Commissary Operating Board (COB), which first met in June 1998. The new board, established by Defense Reform Initiative Directive No. 37, was chaired by senior military service members, on a rotating basis.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE, 1994-1999

As it had done for years, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) continued to question all sorts of government expendi-

tures—among them, the need for commissaries. Unfortunately, in so doing, it also reiterated the erroneous notion that commissaries had originally been intended only for remote posts.

Near the end of March 1994, DeCA learned that the CBO was recommending that after Fiscal Year 1995, commissaries no longer be supported by federal funds. This never was done, but for a while, it was touted as yet another possible way to “make the commissaries self-supporting.”

Two months later, the House Armed Services Committee (HASC) gave DeCA an important vote of confidence, citing the importance of the benefit to recruitment and retention. The committee report stated that “military commissaries are an important non-pay compensation benefit.” Noting that DoD “has a number of cost-saving initiatives underway that will effect [sic] the level of benefits provided,” and concerned about these initiatives, the committee recommended that no commissaries could be closed at a non-closing base without notifying Congress ninety days in advance of the proposed closure date. No major product category could be deleted from the stock assortment, and there could be no adjustments to the types of expenditures made with surcharge funds, without notifying Congress ninety days in advance.

Then in February 1995, the CBO repeated what had been stated in prior reports: “Although commissaries were established in 1866 to provide food and related items to the military personnel assigned to remote posts, the current commissary system has far exceeded that original purpose...” After enumerating the various groups, other than active duty military, who were authorized to shop at commissaries, the report continued, “... commissaries are no longer limited to remote locations.... There are now five stores in the Washington, D.C., area alone. Ending federal support for commissaries might force the system back toward its original purpose and reduce inappropriate competition between these subsidized, federally owned grocery stores and privately owned stores.”

Shortly afterward, DeCA presented doc-



umentary evidence to clarify the commissary mission as originally defined in 1867. As a result, the CBO has never repeated the “remote post” notion. But there were other ways of questioning commissaries’ legitimacy. In January 1996, several congressmen asked the CBO to conduct a comprehensive review of the DoD’s non-appropriated fund and resale activities. They wanted CBO to address costs, benefits, and whether there were “less costly alternatives” to the existing system that



1995: THE FRONT END of the commissary at Naval Surface Warfare Center Dahlgren, Virginia, is shown from a unique angle during its grand opening in June.

DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt

could “provide the same level of benefit.”

In late October 1997, CBO released its study, titled, “The Costs and Benefits of Retail Activities at Military Bases.” Alternatives addressed were: (1) leaving everything as it was, (2) creating a DoD non-appropriated funds-like resale authority, (3) relying on private contractors, and (4) revising incentives for DoD resale activities. The report was the main subject of a hearing of the House special oversight panel on Morale, Welfare, and Recreation

in March 1998. The panel ultimately rejected the report because it failed to take into account the intangible benefits of the resale system, especially those having to do with morale, recruitment, retention, and readiness.

The panel also scuttled any plan to provide non-appropriated funds to subsidize the commissaries; noted that the services all place high value on the commissary benefit, and wanted it to continue (that is what the panel heard from military families and

retirees); and stressed that commissaries and exchanges must emphasize customer service, rather than “maximizing profits” or “increasing total sales.”

PRIVATIZATION: AN ONGOING CONCERN

DeCA’s founding did not entirely do away with the continuing discussions and debates over privatization, which had been going on for many years. In fact, some details of the modern debate were surpris-

'I PRAYED All Day, EVERY Day'

FOR MANY YEARS, subsistence support of soldiers in garrisons and in the field, and of sailors ashore and at sea, was linked with the commissary mission. At one time or another the Commissary General of Subsistence, the Subsistence Department, the Army Quartermaster Corps, the Subsistence Center, the Navy Supply Corps, the Army Troop Support Agency (TSA), and the Air Force Commissary Service (AFCOMS) all sold food items at commissary sales stores, supported mess halls, and supplied rations for exercises and combat operations.

After World War II, the Navy Ship's Store Office (NSSO) ran the Navy's commissaries, and the Navy Supply Corps was responsible for the issue of rations. The Quartermaster managed Army commissaries, while the Army Subsistence Center ran the Army's troop issue function. But on Army and Air Force installations the commissary officer was responsible for storing and distributing subsistence items to the local troop support and troop issue function. This included both dry-storage and cold-storage items. Combat or emergency rations used during exercises or actual combat operations, as well as "shiny cans" of soups, meats, fruits, and vegetables, were transported to men in the field, distributed to dining facilities, and sold in commissaries.

TSA and AFCOMS assumed troop support duties when they took control of their service commissaries in the 1970s, and both agencies would run some important troop support missions. TSA handled troop issue subsistence activities (TISA) during Operation Just Cause in Panama in 1989. AFCOMS ran a tactical field exchange (TFE) in Barbados during the 1983 Grenada operation, built an emergency operations center (EOC), and was a key player in the initial buildup to the Gulf War in 1990-1991. DeCA consolidated the services' commissary functions in 1991, assuming the Air Force troop support function and maintaining eleven Army troop issue locations, where the stores ran warehouses for the Army Materiel Command.*

DeCA's most memorable troop support mission began in 1992 in Somalia, where rival warlords' forces commandeered food, water, and fuel, leaving the general population with little or nothing. In October 1992, the United States and United Nations began deploying troops to Somalia to bring food, medical assistance, and some semblance of law and order to thousands of people in danger of starving. The effort, dubbed "Operation Restore Hope," was well-intentioned, but many Somalis were suspicious of its motives. Some, sympathetic with radicals such as Osama bin Laden, saw the situation as an opportunity to strike against the United States. As a result, the humanitarian effort was frequently endangered. American and coalition troops found themselves in many tight spots, including the infamous Black Hawk Down incident.

DeCA's troop subsistence and readiness division, located in the



FAR FROM PARADISE. Senior Master Sgt. John Sidell (center) and friends at the tactical field exchange in Mogadishu, Somalia. Photo: Tech Sgt. Ray Maltos

Midwest Region headquarters at Kelly Air Force Base, Texas,** was responsible for the Air Force's subsistence operations, and was placed in charge of the troop support mission in Somalia. This division supported American and U.N. troops by running TFEs that sold health and hygiene products, soft drinks, tobacco, and snack foods. The Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) supplied most of the merchandise, while DeCA arranged for logistics support and provided most of the people who ran the TFEs.

The first DeCA team, headed by Staff Sgt. Preston Dickens, deployed to Mombasa, Kenya, but it soon became clear that TFEs were needed in Somalia itself. Senior Master Sgt. Randy Eller, the commissary officer at RAF Bentwaters, England, arranged for support and retail sales facilities in Mogadishu, the Somali capital. A fruit factory would serve as a distribution center, and a building at the local university was to be used as headquarters.

The TFE was in a dilapidated room at the Somali National University in Mogadishu with only two thousand square feet of space, but it was open twelve hours a day, six days a week, and offered four hundred items. In an average week it served 4,550 customers, who spent \$110,000. DeCA Senior Master Sgt. John Sidell, who led the Somalia TFE effort from March to May 1993, later recalled, "We were the biggest morale boost in town."

Initially, the customer base included all twenty-five thousand coalition forces in Somalia, and DeCA was to provide TFEs to troops at all locations, including forward operating sites. Since opposition forces

* — They were located at C. M. Price Support Facility and Rock Island Arsenal, Illinois; Dugway Proving Ground, Utah; Sagami Bara, Sagami Depot, and Camp Zama (Kanto Plain), Japan; Selfridge Air Force Base, Michigan (an Air Force location run by TSA); Sierra Army Depot, California; Tobyhanna Army Depot, Pennsylvania; Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Silver Spring, Maryland; and Yuma Proving Ground, Arizona.

** — This was the same building in which headquarters AFCOMS had been located; as a result the division had been able to use the Emergency Operations Center AFCOMS had built in the basement.



1993: WITH THE TROOPS.

A DeCA serviceman rings up a patron's order at the university tactical field exchange in Mogadishu, Somalia. INSET: Capt. Ron Smith ran the TFEs in Somalia from October to December 1993. DeCA photos



were everywhere, traveling was dangerous, and DeCA personnel often found themselves under fire. When DeCA personnel were to make deliveries into the countryside, they were supposed to use two vehicles, but often only one was available. Sidell later recalled, "We had a job to do, and so we had to take risks. But I prayed all day, every day."

No DeCA personnel were seriously hurt in Somalia, but there were some close calls. One occurred when Sidell first arrived. Eller was driving him to the university from the airport when their HUMVEE was surrounded by a mob of Somalis. Some threw rocks, and one was shooting into the air. Eller managed to drive through the crowd, but Sidell had drawn his pistol and was ready to use it. Fortunately, it hadn't come to that, but he wasn't out of the woods. A large scorpion greeted him in his quarters, and he soon learned to watch out for the local roaches, snakes, and centipedes (reputedly venomous), as well as malarial mosquitoes.

By May 1993, the situation had become very dangerous. Coalition forces came under sniper fire in their own camps, so even standing in line for a shower was a hazardous activity. The unsafe conditions forced

the discontinuance of the sole mobile TFE (known as "the roach coach") as well as all outlying stationary TFEs. DeCA operations became confined to the university, and only U.S., Pakistani, and Tunisian forces, along with Swedish hospital workers, could shop there. The Army supplied retail goods to outlying locations by picking them up from DeCA's University location and providing transport and escort with one truck and several armed HUMVEEs.

Both Sidell and Capt. Ron Smith, who headed the TFEs from October to December 1993, later recalled the dust, dirt, and sand that permeated everything. Small arms, mortars, and rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) were often fired near the university; Smith remembered, "We had to work during the day and quit before night fell so we didn't need to use lights." When Smith left in December, only ten DeCA people, led by Capt. Patrick Dunn, were left in Somalia, supporting seventy-five hundred troops. By the time Dunn and his command left for home a few months later, DeCA had operated seven fixed-site TFEs, one mobile unit, and one airborne unit during their time in-country, serving the troops of twenty-eight nations. Eighty DeCA Air Force personnel had taken part.

Within two years, on October 1, 1995, DeCA closed its troop subsistence and readiness (TS&R) division as the Air Force troop support mission transferred to the Air Force Services

Agency at Randolph Air Force Base, Texas. All civilian employees of the old TS&R division transferred with the mission. In addition, nearly 340 DeCA Air Force personnel working in Troop Support were reassigned to the Air Force, and 163 more were scheduled to transfer within two years. In 1997, DeCA also divested itself of its eleven Army troop issue facilities.

Today, installation dining facilities and MWR functions still purchase goods from local commissaries on

an as-needed basis, but the stores do not supply them with predetermined amounts of foods except for special orders. The price of the goods does not come out of the commissary budget. DeCA no longer has a troop support role, but at any given time it has a large amount of commissary goods en route overseas, usually on ships, that can be diverted, if necessary, to respond to wartime or crisis situations.

As of 2007, John Sidell was the store director at Fort Gordon, Georgia; Ron Smith is a senior fellow at the Defense Department's Resale Activities and Nonappropriated Fund Policy Office in the Pentagon; Randy Eller is zone manager for Zone 31 in Wiesbaden, Germany, and Capt. Patrick Dunn is now a lieutenant colonel and the chief of the Services Division, Air National Guard, Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland.

— Portions of this narrative were contributed by Randy Eller and Ronald J. Kelly

ingly similar to those that had been around since the end of World War I. Lost in heated rhetoric was the fact that there were common misconceptions as to exactly what the commissaries were. Those who opposed the commissaries tended to see them as a grocery chain, in competition with civilian chains. Advocates saw them simply as another long-held government benefit, not in any true competition with civilian grocery stores because they could not attract civilian customers—although the

civilian stores could, and did, try to attract military customers. Also lost in the debate was the fact that DeCA accounted for less than one-half of one percent of the DoD budget. Even DeCA's complete demise would save the taxpayers very little money, and would be accompanied by the potential risk of creating personal financial difficulties for many enlisted commissary patrons—difficulties that were likely to drive them out of the service.

Even when DeCA began to solve its early bill-paying difficulties, the familiar issue resurfaced. Congress had created DeCA to preserve the benefit and save money. Because its base support costs were no longer “hidden” within the services, it appeared as if the new agency was actually more expensive than the four service commissary organizations it replaced. That in turn created concern that the benefit might be turned over to “more efficient” private hands.

The consolidation was meant to make DeCA's costs transparent, making the amount saved apparent to all. Ironically, this also posed something of a problem by making DeCA the target of budget-cutters and privatization advocates. Rather than saving the benefit, for a short time it seemed the consolidation might actually threaten it.

From 1991 to 1999, the commissaries



1996: MR. BEALE. On October 1, 1996, retired Maj. Gen. Richard E. Beale Jr. became DeCA's first civilian director.

DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt

remained under constant pressure from threats of privatization. As early as January 1993, during a speech at the American Logistics Association's Western Roundtable, Will Cofer, a longtime congressional staffer, suggested merging the commissaries with the exchanges might be the only way to preserve the commissary benefit in the long run, given the prevailing climate of budget cuts. As one of the most informed men in the country regarding commissaries at the time, Cofer took most attendees by surprise and

raised concerns over the future of military resale. Two years later, DeCA Director Maj. Gen. Richard E. Beale Jr. briefed the Defense Science Board—the board tasked at the time with investigating the possibilities of privatization within various components of DoD—on his opinion of commissary privatization. In his presentation, Beale stressed that commissaries had

already privatized many functions, such as baggers/carry-outs, deli-bakeries, seafood markets, distribution, stocking, reordering, repair and maintenance, partial meat preparation, floral sections, and janitorial services. He also emphasized many of DeCA's successes: frequent delivery and direct store delivery; delivery ticket invoicing; electronic data interchange and electronic commerce; resale ordering agreements; and DeCA's overseas ordering and receiving system.

Beale's key argument was that when DeCA's high-volume CONUS stores were compared with those of private industry, DeCA was the clear leader in saving its customers money and in cutting expenses. Private industry existed to make a profit, so it could not be expected to assume responsibility for low-volume stores in remote locations (both CONUS and overseas) with the same efficiency and low cost to the taxpayer already being accomplished by DeCA. The general summarized, “Commissaries do a tremendous volume with smaller stores, fewer people, and less than half the operating hours per week.”

As it had repeatedly done previously, Congress continued to reject all proposals to privatize the commissary system because those proposals could not realistically proj-



SAVER 2000. The SAVER 2000 program was initiated at the same ceremony that formally established DeCA as a performance-based organization, part of Vice President Al Gore's “Reinventing Government” initiative. SAVER 2000 emphasized DeCA's renewed commitment to Service, Access, Value, Efficiency, and Response as the agency looked toward “A New Century of Value and Service.” In line with these values, the agency also initiated new World Class Customer Service awards, which rewarded employees who took customer service to whole new levels. The first three winners were (from left), Ok-Chu Niswonger, cashier, Edwards Air Force Base, California; Emma Manuilit, cashier, Naval Air Facility Atsugi, Japan; and Phyllis Hardy, quality assurance evaluator, Bolling Air Force Base, D.C. *DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt*

ect any taxpayer savings, increased benefits to the customer, or viable means of supporting stores overseas. Congress was mindful of those who counted on the commissary benefit—especially young enlistees and aging retirees, who needed the benefit to make ends meet and often wrote to tell their representatives of the value they attached to the benefit.

EXPERIMENTING AS A 'PILOT AGENCY'

In 1994, Deputy Secretary of Defense John Deutch suggested DeCA become a “pilot agency” in accordance with the provisions of the Government Performance and Results Act, which aimed to “reinvent government.” Nothing came of this until 1996, when John Koskinen, deputy director of the Office of Management and Budget, approached Dr. John Hamre, the DoD Comptroller, asking he nominate a DoD agency as a performance-based organization (PBO). The concept was part of the Clinton administration’s effort to “streamline” and “reinvent” government, making it more responsive to the needs of the American people. Hamre, who supported the commissary benefit, hoped PBO status would enable DeCA to avoid hostile reports and privatization attempts. In theory, PBOs would have some flexibility, enabling them to bypass some of the bureaucratic procedures and red tape that typically limited federal agencies’ effectiveness.

On October 1, 1996, during a special ceremony held in the Navy memorial’s auditorium in Washington, D.C., DeCA became the first DoD agency designated as a PBO. During the same ceremony, Beale—just days after his military retirement—was reintroduced as the agency’s first civilian director. He was to guide DeCA’s transition from a traditional DoD agency to its new PBO status.

At the same ceremony, DeCA’s “SAVER 2000” program also made its debut. The “SAVER” acronym itself represented “Service, Access, Value, Efficiency, Response,” while the “2000” referred to the agency’s new emphasis on improving upon those areas by 2000, and



1996: GARMISCH, Germany. A commissary was tucked inside this charming building from 1949 until 2002. The structure was originally built in 1936 as headquarters for the German Army’s 1st Mountain Division. The U.S. Army made the building into a headquarters of its own in 1945, and by 1949 it housed a small commissary, PX, snack bar and theater. The commissary underwent several renovations and remained in service until a new store, nearly double in size and with a thousand more line items than its predecessor, opened several miles away in 2002. The building’s mural is of a style commonly used throughout Bavaria, and depicts elements of local history. The two men in the mural are Holy Roman Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa (left), who in the twelfth century gave the Duchy of Bavaria to Henry the Lion, Duke of Saxony (right). DeCA photos courtesy Garmisch commissary



1997: CAMP PENDLETON,

California. Two young Marines patronize the store at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton. This was one of the first DeCA stores to target young patrons and start spreading the news of commissary savings among single enlistees.

DeCA photo: Carole Ann Fowler

continuing with them into the next century.

As time passed, it became evident that although the PBO concept was well-founded, and other government agencies could profit by it, DeCA needed revenue sources of its own, rather than being dependent upon taxpayer and surcharge dollars, before such a designation could actually do the agency any good. The ideals of PBO would linger while those of SAVER 2000 would persist, as they were an integral part of the commissary culture. But within a few years, new initiatives under Beale's successor took precedence, and the memory of the possibilities of PBO faded into the realm of the "last century."

EMPLOYEE AND STORE RECOGNITION

Nothing boosts morale like receiving an award. DeCA established awards for its stores early in its existence and first presented them in 1992 (*see pp. 436-37*). For the title of Best Commissary, stores would be eligible to compete in one of four categories, based upon store size, sales, and location. The awards were named for prominent people in commissary history, whose names had already been used for

various Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps commissary system awards. Using them again was a nod toward preserving and honoring the heritage of each of the services. A fifth award, called simply "The Director's Award," would be added in 2005 for the best of DeCA's "superstores."

The Bill Nichols Award for Best Large Store in the United States was named for Congressman William Flynt Nichols (D-

Alabama), a prominent member of the U.S. House of Representatives, a longtime member of the House Armed Services Committee, and a consistent supporter of the commissary benefit. The Richard M. Paget Award for Best Small Store in the United States honored a retired Navy captain who became a member of the first Navy Resale Advisory Committee, remained on the committee for forty years, was influential in the formation of the Navy Ship's Store Office's (NSSO) and had a lasting positive influence on Navy morale and welfare. The Dan Daniel Award for Best Large Store overseas honored the memory of Congressman Dan Daniel (D-Virginia), a colleague of Nichols, a member of the House Armed Services Committee, and a staunch supporter of the commissaries. The L. Mendel Rivers award for Best Small Store overseas was named for Congressman L. Mendel Rivers (D-South Carolina), former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee who took an active role in preserving the commissary benefit. (*See the Appendices for a list of all known store awards since the 1970s, including all best store awards bestowed by DeCA, 1991-2007.*)



1996: HAMMER AWARD. In a brief ceremony at the Fort Myer, Virginia, commissary, Doug Farbrother of the National Performance Review (I) presents a Hammer Award to DeCA's facilities directorate. Accepting the award are (l-r) Steve Rossetti, executive director of MWR and Resale Activities, Marvin Beck from DeCA's Fort Lee facilities office, and Walt Winters from the DeCA Facilities Office, design and construction division, located at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt

1996: CAMP LEJEUNE, North Carolina. The new store, opened by DeCA in 1993, replaced two old stores that had been located at Hadnot Point and Tarawa Terrace.

DeCA photo



SOUTH KOREA: The Benefit Along the Peninsula

THE STORY of American military sales commissaries in South Korea began after the end of the Korean War. From 1953 to 1959 there were six major supply points for ground troops in South Korea. Of these, three issued rations and made bulk sales: Supply Point 46 at Taejon, Supply Point 41 at Seoul, and the 55th Quartermaster Depot at Ascom City. Three more only issued rations: Supply Point 48 at Pusan, Supply Point 47 at Taegu, and Supply Point 39 at Uijongbu.

Families could not accompany members of the armed forces to duty stations in Korea until the late 1950s, after the political and military situations stabilized. The first commissary sales stores were near Taegu Air Base. Stores opened at Naval Air Station Chinhae, Seoul, and Pusan (Camp Hialeah) by 1961. In the early 1970s, stores opened at the key Air Force base at Osan and the Army base at Yongsan.

Commissaries also opened at the Army posts of Camps Carroll, Casey, Edwards, Henry (at Taegu), Howze, Humphreys, Page, Red Cloud, Stanley, Walker (at Taegu), and at Hannam Village.

Redeployment of forces in Korea to new positions relative to the 17th Parallel were underway when this book went to press, and the long-range effects of this redeployment on commissary services in Korea remained uncertain. While some stores have recently closed (Camp Howze in 2004 and Camp Page in 2005), some new stores have recently opened: Camp Red Cloud, a new location, where a store was placed in a remodeled building in 2002; Kunsan Air Base, where in 2004 a new store replaced one built in 1980; a new store for Camp Humphreys in 2005; and Camp Eagle, a new site opened in August 2006. As of 2007, there also were central distribution centers at Osan Air Base, Taegu, and Yongsan.



▲ **2004: THE STORE** at the Hannam Village Housing Area (ABOVE) near Seoul was co-located with the main exchange and exchange activities. *DeCA photo* ▼ **BELOW:** The Camp Stanley store, shown here in 1989, was one of six annexes of the Yongsan store. *TSA photo, DeCA historical file*



▲ **1998: A WAREHOUSE** worker stacks peanut butter at the Taegu store. *DeCA photo courtesy Taegu commissary*



▲ **2001: A TROUPE** of musicians and dancers added culture and entertainment to a case lot sale at Osan Air Base. *DeCA photo courtesy Osan commissary*



▲ **1987: CAMP CASEY.** A new store was opened in 1992 and was nearly twice the size of the old one. *DeCA photo courtesy Camp Casey commissary*



1996: POS-M TRAINING AT FORT LEE.

NCR technicians installed the new point-of-sale-modernization (POS-M) front end system at the Fort Lee, Virginia, commissary on July 12, 15 and 16. BELOW: Cashier Kim Martin practices on the new POS-M system while warehouse worker Jerry Hurt (l) and an NCR trainer (r) watch. RIGHT: Suzanne Davis (l) and Maxine Leonard practice using the POS-M handheld while their NCR trainer (r) looks on. BELOW LEFT: An NCR technician installs the POS-M system at the Fort Lee store.

DeCA photos: Pete Skirbunt



Over the next few years, the agency also established the Blackwell Leadership Award, a Best Enlisted award, several merchandising awards, and the World Class Customer Service Awards. While all were high honors and were coveted by employees, the Best Store awards received the most attention and were the most prestigious. With a history extending back to the 1960s, they were emblematic of the customer-service goals to be attained by true team efforts. To use a baseball analogy, the individual awards were like hitting the most home runs in a season, while a Best Store award was a team effort and team award—like winning the World Series.

RECOGNITION AND AWARDS FOR THE AGENCY

In the 1990s, “Hammer Awards” were given by Vice President Al Gore to agen-

cies, departments, and organizations that had made strides in “reinventing government” by making governmental processes simpler, more responsive, less expensive, less bureaucratic and more customer-friendly. The awards consisted of a framed hammer, accompanied by a signed note from the vice president.

DeCA received its first Hammer Award in December 1995, from John Hamre, the OSD comptroller. The agency earned the award based upon its creation of the operations support center and the establishment of the DeCA Overseas Ordering and Receiving System (DOORS), resale ordering agreements (ROAs), and delivery ticket invoices (DTIs), which streamlined the ordering and receiving process.* A year later, the agency received two more Hammer Awards in a ceremony at the Fort Myer, Virginia, commissary. One went to

the agency’s facilities directorate and the other went to its inspector general’s office. Doug Farbrother of the National Performance Review and Steve Rossetti, executive director of MWR and resale activities, presented the awards to Marvin Beck of the facilities directorate at DeCA headquarters; Walt Winters and Bert Landry of DeCA’s directorate of facilities (design and construction division) at Lackland Air Force Base; and Col. Mike Steinberg and John Maffei of the DeCA inspector general’s office.

Such awards validated Beale’s opinion that in an era of trying to get “more for less,” commissaries were a model for success, and saved far more money than the Jones Commission ever projected. In June 1998, DeCA received a Presidential Quality Award because it had saved taxpayers over \$625 million since its inception in 1991.

* — Ironically, DeCA received this award on the same day that Beale defended the agency in front of the Defense Science Board (see p. 418).

A FUNDING SHORTFALL

In May 1997, the Defense Commissary Board (DCB) discussed a projected \$48-million budget shortfall—the result of budget cuts made on the assumption that DeCA would quickly achieve savings by becoming a PBO. But most of DeCA's PBO initiatives had been rejected and no savings had occurred. At the request of the services, DeCA was keeping open several stores marked for closure, at its own expense. To solve DeCA's resulting funding problems, the board appointed a working group to study options. Ten days later, the board met again to resolve the fiscal '97 portion of the \$25-million shortfall. The services agreed to reprogram funds, using ratios determined by the number of stores on each service's installations. Not all the services were pleased with that arrangement. Two balked before a week had passed.

This prompted immediate action, and shortly thereafter, for the first time in history, a commissary agency director [Dick Beale] went “into the Tank”—that is, he met with the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Beale, eager to tell the DeCA story, provided background on how the shortfall had occurred, and explained how he had kept seven stores open* “out of hide,” as he put it, to continue serving customers in the vicinity, with no increase in operating funds. He suggested a surcharge increase might be helpful.

The chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General John Shalikashvili, replied that because of the military's renewed emphasis on quality of life, the surcharge could not be increased. Instead, the Joint Chiefs solved the shortfall by making funds avail-

able. Pentagon budget decisions later assured continued funding from 1999 to fiscal 2003, enabling the commissaries to maintain prevailing levels of service.

OSD believed the military Services needed a more direct and responsible role in oversight and funding of DeCA. A short time after the meeting in “the Tank,” the department issued Defense Reform Initiative Directive (DRID) No. 37 which devolved both the funding and oversight of DeCA to the Services, through the newly established Commissary Operating Board (COB). Some in Congress believed the

OSD's actions exceeded what was authorized by law, but they ultimately accepted the principle, amending the statute pertaining to the oversight of defense agencies. Congress also inserted a special provision for the Secretary of Defense to use the COB to assist in DeCA's oversight.

GUARD AND RESERVE STORE PRIVILEGES

The National Defense Authorization Act of October 1, 1998, increased the commissary privilege entitlement from 12 to 24 visits per year for members of the Reserve and National Guard, as well as Reserve and Guard retirees younger than 60 years of age. This increase had long been considered and debated, and its implementation was an acknowledgement of the vital role the Guard and Reserve played in the national defense. Doubling the number of store visits would increase sales and generate additional surcharge funds. To facilitate this initiative, a new ID card went into service on January 1, 2001.

This was the first modern step to extend the commissary benefit to additional members of the armed forces community. Soon, the events of September 11, 2001 placed new demands upon the armed forces. In recognition of their expanding role in the nation's defense, Congress authorized full-time, unlimited shopping privileges to the Reserves, the National Guard, and their retirees.

NEW TECHNOLOGIES

To maintain and enhance its responsiveness to its customers, DeCA needed to upgrade its facilities. Never before had the government been so determined to match



1997: KANEOHE BAY, Hawaii. The Kaneohe store served a Marine Corps station that had opened in 1939. It had been one of the first commissaries known to have used both the “nest carts” and carts with child seats—something it still needed in later years, as there were numerous families in a nearby housing area. The happy family shown here was shopping in a new store that had opened in 1993 and included sixteen registers, a deli, a fish market, a bakery, and a big 35,894-square-foot sales area. DeCA photo: Carole Ann Fowler

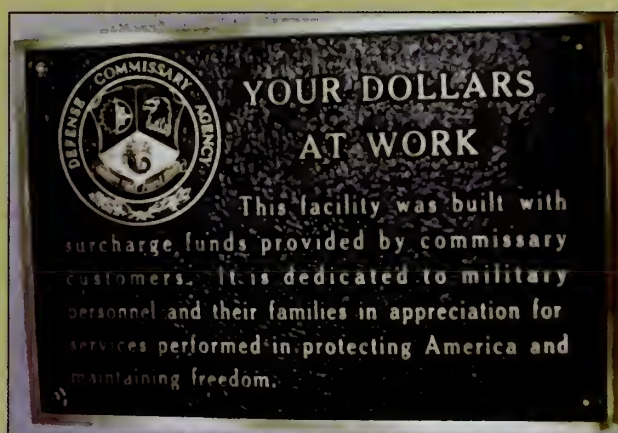
* — Naval Station Long Beach, Naval Air Station Alameda, Moffett Field, March Air Force Base, Presidio of San Francisco, Harrison Village (formerly, Fort Benjamin Harrison), and Fort Devens. Naval Training Center San Diego was soon added to the list, as well.

The **SURCHARGE** Fuels Commissary Construction

MODERN SHOPPERS at military commissaries are able to save over 30 percent of what they would spend at nearby civilian grocery stores. The Defense Commissary Agency follows a policy, initiated in 1825, of selling goods at cost. There is no mark-up or profit for the commissary, in the traditional sense. However, there is a 1 to 7 percent allowance added to the cost of meat, produce, and some other products to make up for losses suffered due to spoilage and shrinkage. Additionally, a 5-percent surcharge across the board is assessed at checkout. Most commissary shoppers know about the surcharge, but not all of them are aware of how that money is used. The surcharge collected at the register goes back into the stores, paying for new store construction, renovation, maintenance and repairs, equipment, and store-level information technology systems such as the checkouts. Appropriated fund (tax) dollars are not used for these purposes; taxpayers not eligible to shop in the commissaries do not pay for commissary construction.

The surcharge provides modern facilities for service members while simultaneously reducing overall taxpayer costs. The money it generates is used to make commissary shopping as quick, convenient, and pleasant as shopping at a civilian supermarket. That in turn encourages customers to continue using their commissary privilege, helping generate more surcharge funds to build and maintain modern stores.

In 1879, to pay for spoilage and transportation costs, an experimental surcharge levied a 10-percent charge on all commissary goods except tobacco. Unpopular among enlisted men, who were paid only \$13 per



month, it was repealed after five years. Four decades later, from 1923 to 1927, Congress asked the commissary customer to pay “the customary overhead costs of freight, handling, storage, and delivery.” The stores did this by raising prices, including transport and storage costs in the price at the checkout. The word surcharge was never mentioned, but that’s what the price hike constituted. It stopped in 1928, and there was no talk of raising prices or using a sur-

charge during the Great Depression (1929-1940) or during World War II (1941-45).

The modern surcharge began in 1952, when Congress decided commissaries needed to be more self-supporting. Congress and the Defense Department directed the services to have their commissaries add a 2-percent surcharge to the price of goods to cover costs of purchasing and maintaining equipment and supplies.

From the beginning, the services followed different courses in fulfilling the law. The Army and the Air Force used a flat surcharge that would be added to the total bill at checkout. However, the Navy and Marines Corps employed a variable surcharge that was more on some items, less on others, but still averaged the prescribed 2 percent. Throughout the next twenty years the rate fluctuated and varied from service to service. It was usually slightly higher at overseas locations. For example, the Army charged an extra half percent at its overseas stores.

In 1974, to provide funds for construction and improvements of store facilities, Congress fixed the surcharge at Army and Air Force stores in the United States at 3 percent (3.5 percent in Europe). This was increased to 4 percent in 1976, and to 5 percent in April 1983. The Navy and Marines increased their variable surcharge to amounts that approximated those percentages. Today, more than twenty years later, the surcharge is still 5 percent at all DeCA stores, stateside and overseas. Congress respecified its uses in an act that took effect October 2001.

Some people describe the surcharge as a tax, but that generalization is inaccurate. A tax would be spent on any one of many government programs or projects. Surcharge dollars are spent specifically on building, modernizing, and maintaining store facilities.

Commissary customers actually help pay for their benefit twice: once as taxpayers through their tax dollars (which pay commissary employees’ salaries), and again as patrons, through the surcharge. It is, however, still an excellent deal for the customer. People paying the surcharge today may someday be stationed—or their friends, sons, and daughters may someday be stationed—at an installation where surcharge dollars have modernized the old store or built a new one.

The surcharge enables military families to be treated as first-class citizens, not only with a substantial savings on their food bill but also with new and modern facilities. Such families are more likely to be happy with the military lifestyle, and are more likely to encourage re-enlistment. That reduces the costs of training replacement personnel and produces a military with high morale. It is, therefore, a tangible benefit to the nation.

2005: THE COMMISSARY SURCHARGE
funded renovations to the store at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. DeCA photo



the types of stores civilians had.

DIBS: The DeCA Interim Business System (DIBS) was the computerized inventory management application designed to link the five different programs used by the DeCA's four commissary predecessors to its future operating application, the Defense Commissary Information System (DCIS). Begun on September 30, 1991—the day before DeCA's official opening—DIBS was phased in over the course of the next two and a half years. It was designed

to enable central pricing at the region level. It was also used for ordering, receiving, and accounting functions, and it maintained financial and warehouse records. It linked front-end systems and sent price changes to all connected scanning systems. The DIBS automated system was also expected to save personnel costs.

DOORS: Bob Tate, DeCA's director of operations, conceived DOORS—the DeCA Overseas Ordering and Receiving System. Through DOORS it would be possible to

establish some sort of frequent delivery system (enjoyed by stores in the United States) for overseas locations. Eventually, DIBS enabled frequent delivery ordering in CONUS, as well as DOORS ordering overseas, both to be conducted directly with American distributors. This allowed DeCA to stop going through the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) and the Defense Personnel Support Center (DPSC) in Philadelphia for food supplies. Getting away from traditional ordering channels made DOORS a cost-

1999: THE LAST OF THE PANAMA commissaries to close, the Howard Air Force Base store is shown here in June, six months before the canal and all U.S. military installations in the former Canal Zone were given over to Panama. *DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt*



saving and time-saving initiative. In fact, orders now took half the time to reach Europe; in some cases, delivery time was reduced by months.

DCIS: After the bill-paying problem was resolved, most DeCA initiatives from 1991 to 2007 produced positive results, with two major exceptions: One was the PBO initiative. The other was the Defense Commissary Information System (DCIS), which was to integrate all DeCA computer systems and become the permanent operating

system. But this “commercial, off the shelf” system proved inadequate, mainly because DeCA—unlike commercial supermarket chains—did not control its own distribution system. Commercial chains received deliveries at a central distribution center, from which they reshipped to their stores, controlling their own supply lines by using lot numbers or other special designators. But goods purchased by DeCA were delivered directly to its stores by the manufacturers, and were controlled by their UPC

number. DCIS couldn’t handle this seemingly insignificant difference, and on July 31, 1998, after two years of unsuccessful effort, the DCIS contract was allowed to expire.

From MILSTRIP to ROAs: DeCA, as a \$5-billion-per-year business, was determined to take advantage of its size as a major, centralized business (rather than four smaller commissary systems). It looked for ways to modernize its methods. One old practice that was phased out was



Where's **THE BEEF?**

THERE ARE TIMES when less is more. By 1995, the European Region's meat products were processed and supplied in a makeshift fashion from the commissary meat departments at Rhein-Main and Ramstein Air Bases in Germany, and RAF Lakenheath, England. Region Director Bob Tate wanted to create one, centralized meat-processing plant operation that could concentrate on delivering the best product to the region's sixty-plus stores.

"After reviewing several sites in and around the area, we decided to use the Ramstein commissary warehouse with its eighteen-thousand [square] feet of space as a temporary site until a new plant could be built," said Jack Fowler, a meat specialist who became the project officer for the construction of the new plant and eventually became the meat facility's first manager. "This was the perfect site because it was close to the Ramstein flight lines and to the region's cold-storage facilities from which all perishables are shipped to all commissaries except for the United Kingdom." The region would maintain the meat operation at Lakenheath until the new plant was up and running.

The transition to a centralized meat plant meant the end of on-site butcher shops within European commissaries and a major adjustment in the lives of the many people who worked in them. The Ramstein meat plant was initially staffed by many of the people who had been displaced.

Years before entertaining the notion of building a centralized plant, the European Region had already made a giant leap in meat processing when it began using vacuum packaging under then-region director Bill Mackrain. The process helped provide better availability, longer shelf life, easier shipping and better safety and sanitation thanks to a 99.7-percent air-free package.

On March 2, 1998, the new \$4.5-million Ramstein CMPP facility opened, and every store in the region was soon offering the new package. Fowler ran the plant until July 1999, when John Hoca took the reins. Fowler would go on to become DeCA's first meat operations manager. Hoca would retire in 2006, and David Costello, the former manager of the Lakenheath meat operation, took over.

Today, the CMPP and its ninety employees process more than one million pounds of fresh beef and pork per month in a modern, clean and efficient facility. They unwrap, inspect, cut, grind, re-wrap, weigh,



2003: EMPLOYEES of DeCA-Europe's central meat processing plant at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, assemble for a group photograph. Pictured here in the foreground are (from left) Arno Franke, meat specialist; John Hoca, plant manager; and David Costello, assistant plant manager.

DeCA photo: Wally Raynes, European Region

label, box and load into trucks one million hamburger patties, 41,500 porterhouse and T-bone steaks, 25,000 roasts, and 69,000 pounds of spiced beef and pork each month. The plant performs its own cleaning and ensures all sanitation and safety needs are met. The Ramstein facility provides an increased number of products in modern and safe packaging while still filling personal orders for special cuts, even to stores in the furthest corners of the region.

The meat processed by this plant is primarily USDA Choice beef and Bavarian pork, eighty-six beef items and forty-five pork items—far more than any in-store meat department had ever offered.

While most of the meat is shipped fresh, the plant also ships 33,195 frozen pounds per month to stores in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Greece, and Kuwait, and supplies store requests for frozen ribs. A U.S. Army food safety officer and a quality assurance specialist provide their expertise to the operation, guaranteeing the safety of all products.

— Portions of this story were contributed by Gerri Young, public affairs officer for DeCA Europe.

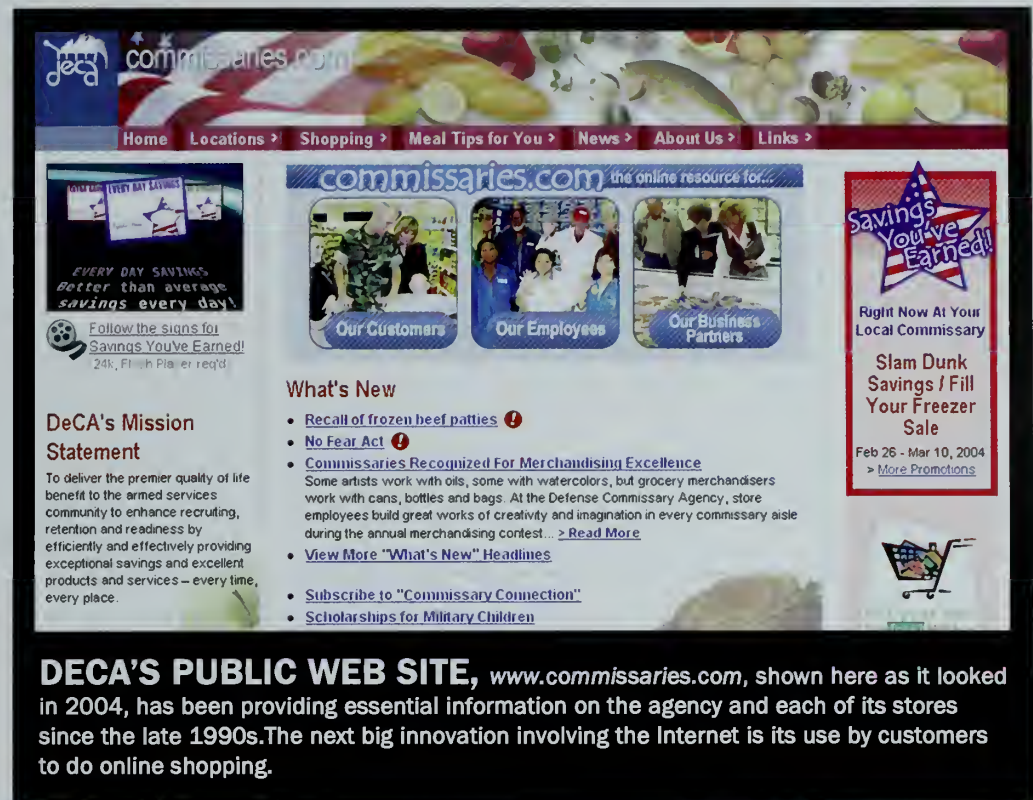
the means of ordering produce and brand-name items: the paper-based Military Standard Requisitioning and Issue Procedures (MILSTRIP). DeCA shifted to a system of "360 Orders," an automated ordering system based upon store inventory, followed by blanket delivery orders (BDOs)—one per store per vendor—that established DeCA's terms and conditions for ordering items from the supply bulletins. BDOs were in turn replaced by resale ordering agreements (ROAs), through which the agency began assuming the task of ordering its own brand-name items.

Cyberspace and the DeCA Web sites: By the late 1990s, many products that people had done without for thousands of years—such as home computers—were becoming "must-have" items. Such was the case with having a home computer and being connected to the Internet. DeCA responded to its customers' needs when it established its first Internet Web site, *www.commissaries.com*. Later, a *www.deca.gov* site was also established for exclusive use by DeCA personnel. Both sites began to revolutionize the way people contacted, received information from, and did business with DeCA.

POSITIVE FEEDBACK

In August 1999, for the first time since 1972, a government report acknowledged there was an important link between commissaries and the retention and recruitment of military personnel. The report, "Military Personnel: Perspectives of Surveyed

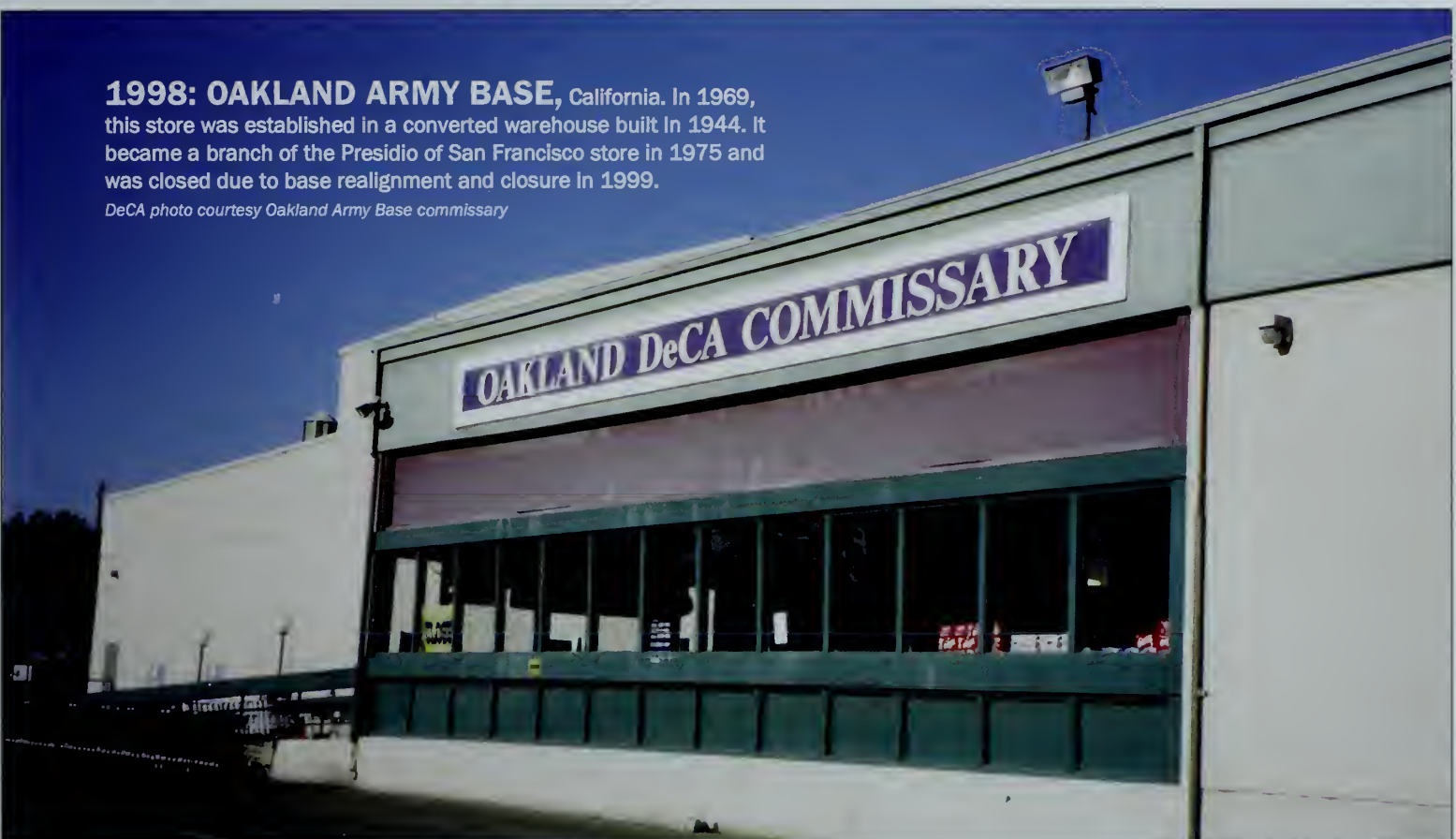
Service Members in Retention-Critical Specialties," prepared for Congress by the General Accounting Office (GAO), was based upon survey findings on a group of 210 officers and 739 enlisted personnel. It confirmed not only that active-duty military personnel were very pleased with their



DECA'S PUBLIC WEB SITE, *www.commissaries.com*, shown here as it looked in 2004, has been providing essential information on the agency and each of its stores since the late 1990s. The next big innovation involving the Internet is its use by customers to do online shopping.

1998: OAKLAND ARMY BASE, California. In 1969, this store was established in a converted warehouse built in 1944. It became a branch of the Presidio of San Francisco store in 1975 and was closed due to base realignment and closure in 1999.

DeCA photo courtesy Oakland Army Base commissary



BEHIND THE AISLES: Professional and Support Staff

THE MAJORITY of this book describes the mission and function of commissary workers and troop issue staff at the installation level. It would be incomplete, however, if it did not emphasize that there have been, and still are, many people in vital support roles. They work behind the scenes in offices located at the stores, in area, zone, and complex offices, region offices, and the agency headquarters.

The dedicated professionals at these offices—personnel who are not today classified as “1144s,” the government designation for commissary personnel—have always been a key factor in the success of the commissaries. The offices and their duties have been as varied as their titles suggest. Headquarters and region staff deal with every aspect of the commissary business other than the actual retailing process: operations, acquisition, contracting, personnel issues, finances, bill-paying, purchasing, legal issues, public affairs, safety and security, food safety, facilities designers, construction, building maintenance, graphics. Complex and zone offices have had more “hands-on” duties, but even they could not entirely escape the joy of shuffling papers.

The people working in these offices today have much the same duties as their historical counterparts, even though their methods, and sometimes the titles of their offices and directorates, have changed. The human resources people of today were formerly known by such names as manpower, or personnel, or both. People once known as engineers are now facilities specialists; public affairs personnel now work in corporate communications. Some things have stayed constant. There have always been, and still are, people working in the offices of the general counsel, the inspector general, and internal review; and, as with earlier commissary organizations, DeCA has a liaison office at the Pentagon that helps to maintain contact with key Pentagon and congressional offices.

There are other functions that are recent innovations, unheard-of in commissaries’ earliest days: equal employment opportunity, an office to assist small and disadvantaged businesses, and information resources management—which became information technology—and strategic planning.

When the commissary agencies had a large number of military personnel, there were not only people in uniform running the stores, there were senior enlisted advisors at the regions and headquarters. There



▲ **1992:** Bruce Frederick (center) of the directorate of operations discusses a store blueprint with facilities directorate engineers Gary Herubin (left) and Derrick Williams (right). DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt



▲ **2005:** Claudie Grant, the diversity manager for DeCA's equal employment opportunity office. DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt



▲ **1992:** Public affairs specialist Herb Greene works to produce a “DeCA Today” video, a means by which headquarters personnel sought to better communicate with the field.

DeCA photo: Staff Sgt. Derryl Fields

was also a troop support function with troop issue facilities. In the mid-1990s, DeCA gave up its military manpower slots, and personnel who retained their troop support positions ended up working for other agencies.

No position is immune from change. It used to be a matter of tradition that a military officer, usually wearing either one or two stars, was in charge of the Army, Navy, and Air Force commissaries; civilians in charge of the Marine Corps commissary branch answered to the officer in charge of the Support Services Division. Today, a high-ranking military officer runs the Defense Commissary Agency Board of Directors, the agency's governing body. Although the position of DeCA director was formerly a military slot, it is now held by a Senior Executive Service civilian.

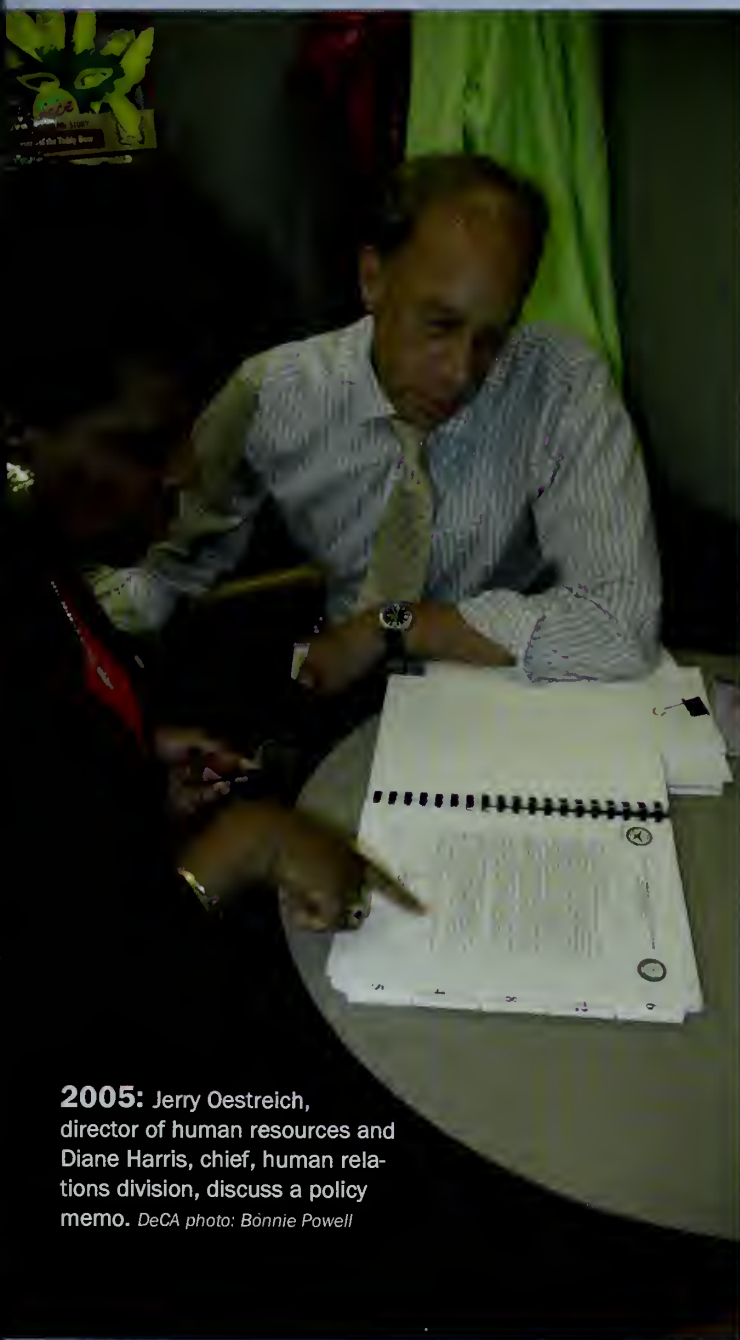


2000: Winnie Edwards, secretary at Smokey Point, Washington.

DeCA photo:
Pete Skirbunt



▲ **2004:** A team of accountants and financial experts from the Defense Finance and Accounting Service and DeCA helps the agency achieve "unqualified" certification of its financial records for the second straight year. This run of success reached six years by the time this book was published in 2008. (Seated, L-R): Barbara Crawford, LeJeune Williams, and Gale Calloway. (Standing, L-R): Bob Anderson, Rio Garrison, Mary Crum, Joy DeBonis, Judy Jackson, and Diane Mays. DeCA photo: Herb Greene



2005: Jerry Oestreich, director of human resources and Diane Harris, chief, human relations division, discuss a policy memo. DeCA photo: Bonnie Powell



▲ **1998:** Like every modern business organization, DeCA depends upon its computer system. The information technology directorate at DeCA headquarters is filled with people trained to troubleshoot the system and to assist employees around the clock. Pictured here in the main computer room are (L-R) Lannie Gardner, DeCA/IT employee, and IT contractors Dave Kendall-Sperry and Jimmy LaBrecque. DeCA photo: Herb Greene



▲ **1993:** Mary Patrick at the East Service Center's contracting division. DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt



1997: PORT HUENEME, California, Grand Opening: A Marine in full dress uniform shops with his family following the combined grand opening ceremonies for the commissary and the exchange in March 1997.

DeCA photo: John Ryan

commissary benefit, but they listed it among the top three quality of life factors encouraging them to remain in the military.

This report went beyond previous studies, which had often been discounted by commissary opponents because they had been based largely upon opinions gathered from people while they shopped in a commissary—a methodology that automatically excluded anyone who chose not to use the commissary benefit. This time, personnel who did not use the commissary were included in the study group.

Commissary benefits still ranked as the second-most important quality of life factor among enlisted personnel. Only fitness and sports activity facilities ranked higher, largely because of the youth of active-duty personnel. Meanwhile, commissaries were third among officers' quality of life considerations; fitness and sports activity facilities, and chaplain services and religious ministries, ranked higher. Showing personnel of all ranks were cognizant of their future, the ability to use the commissary in retirement ranked fifth in quality of life consideration among officers and sixth among enlistees.

Air Force Maj. Gen. Robert J. Courter Jr., DeCA's new director, would later comment, "It's encouraging that the service members feel their commissary benefit is so important. We've believed that to be true for a long time, but this is the first time there has been an official report documenting this link to retention."

Other DeCA personnel, while not at all surprised by the findings, were delighted that a government agency had finally acknowledged that commissary users were getting a good and important deal. Bob Tate, director of the European Region, said, "The survey confirms what we've known all along about the importance of commissary stores ... The commissary is part of the military family, and it understands and sincerely appreciates the patrons—both for who they are, and for what they represent. We don't see them simply as another sale, or another dollar to be rung up at the register."



1997: PORTSMOUTH, New Hampshire/Maine, had a store during the late 1940s, but it closed in 1950 as part of the armed services' agreement with the Philbin subcommittee to cut back on commissaries (see Chapters 7 and 8). The naval shipyard went without a commissary until DeCA opened this store in 1995. Originally a warehouse, the facility was converted to a modern store. The shipyard is on an island in Kittery, Maine, across from Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

DeCA photo courtesy NSY Portsmouth commissary

BASE REALIGNMENT AND CLOSURES

Shortly after the breakup of the Soviet Union—a colossal event that changed the world and effectively ended the Cold War—there was a great deal of speculation about “cashing in on the peace dividend.” This was another way of saying that a lot of money formerly earmarked for the military could now be put to use in other ways. The United States began reducing its military expenditures as it shifted to more of a market economy, which meant that the number of people in

uniform would be cut and bases would be closed. One of the primary mechanisms for this shift was Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC), which closed some military installations while enlarging others. Many bases actually got larger, but more were reduced in size and scope, and when bases closed, commissaries closed as well.

DeCA mirrored the services in its actions to keep stores open as long as possible, continuing to provide for active-duty and retiree customers in a given area as long as it could. Store closures could make things tough for commissary patrons in the



1998: BAD AIBLING, Germany. This store had a chalet-style entryway with a sturdy railing on the roof to catch ice and snow, similar to—but more effective than—the Snowbirds at Fort McNair, Washington, D.C. (see page 36)

DeCA photo courtesy Bad Aibling store

United States, where many retirees, reservists, and members of the National Guard regularly shopped in stores that were slated for closing. From October 1991 through December 2006, 170 stores* closed, either because of BRAC actions or service decisions that shut down entire installations. Such closures were not DeCA's decision. Mindful of both the “people always!” in its slogan and its commitment to customer service, DeCA always tried to keep stores open whenever bases closed to continue serving as many customers as possible. The rule of thumb was

*— This figure counts as one closure the store at Wildflecken, Germany, that actually closed, reopened, and closed again. During the same period, sixty-five new stores were opened, fifty-five of which were replacement stores for aging facilities. The other ten opened at locations where there had been no active commissary.



1999: NEW DÉCOR PACKAGE. When the new Anchorage Area commissary opened on Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, in September 1999, it took the place of two old stores—Elmendorf's, which had opened in 1980, and Fort Richardson's, which had been doing business since 1956. This was the first store to use DeCA's new décor package on its first day of business. The two signs shown here were symbolic of the Army and Air Force personnel this store served. *DeCA photo: Rick Brink*

that if a hundred active-duty personnel remained at or near a closed installation, a commissary could stay open. Often it was a scaled-back version of the old store, but anything was far better than nothing at all. Occasionally, the services requested that certain stores stay open beyond their scheduled closure dates, and DeCA, hindered by a shortage of funds for such purposes, tried to cooperate as much as it

could. After 1997, the services themselves provided funds for such extensions.

Meanwhile, DeCA continued to fulfill a congressional requirement that dated to the early 1950s to assess every one of its commissaries as to their level of necessity, the need for renovation or replacement, or the desirability for them to remain open versus the possibility of closing them and redirecting their resources to other stores.

These assessment recommendations went to the Commissary Operating Board and then to the Department of Defense itself. The department would decide whether or not a store would remain open.

Many old stores had old equipment, wiring, and plumbing, making them expensive to operate and maintain, while their sales were usually comparatively low. Most would require expensive upgrades if they

were kept open. Meanwhile, the overall product selection and services offered by nearby newer stores were significantly greater than those at the old commissaries. DeCA believed closing small, old stores located near newer, larger ones would help retiree customers by giving them an alternative store in which to shop. It would reduce agency costs and allow the agency to reapply appropriated funds to improve the overall benefit. But, as the total number of open stores shrank, it was a chal-

lenge to continue serving as many customers as before.

NOTEWORTHY STORE CLOSINGS

While DeCA had to close stores literally worldwide, a number of locations stood out as being particularly unusual or special, and are worthy of noting here. On the northern Great Plains, DeCA had five small stores serving unique military communities that supported Air Force Strategic Training Ranges. These stores were locat-

ed, along with active-duty housing, in small towns from which the stations took their names: Belle Fourche, South Dakota; Dickinson, North Dakota; Forsyth, Montana; LaJunta, Colorado; and Wilder, Wyoming. The stores were co-located with exchanges, community centers, and station offices, and ranged in size from 1,940 to 2,500 square feet of sales area, carrying 2,000 to 3,400 line items. All were branch or satellite locations that received support and several deliveries per week from larger



1998: RETIREE COUNCIL, Fort Lee, Virginia. Commissary Officer Reed Leader gives a store tour to members of the DeCA Retiree Council. The council was created to begin two-way communication between the agency and its retiree customers. Eventually the retiree council would become the patron council, including active duty as well as Guard and Reserve members. Pictured here (from left) are Leader, Col. Bruce Keller (Air Force retired), Maj. Gen. William Gourley (Army, retired), Lt. Col. Gary Smith (Army retired), and Sgt. Maj. Harold G. Overstreet (Marine retired). Three years later, on September 11, 2001, Smith was killed, along with 183 other people, when terrorists hijacked a plane and flew it into the Pentagon. Smith, chief of the Army's retirement services office, perished, along with his deputy, Max Beilke, while attending a meeting in the section of the Pentagon destroyed in the attack. DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt

THE ENVELOPE PLEASE: Store and Personnel Awards

SINCE THE 1950s, commissaries have received hundreds of plaques and trophies from the retail grocery industry in recognition of outstanding performance during special promotions, sales, or merchandising competitions. However, the commissaries' most prized awards are the official ones from local installation communities, the major commands in charge of each installation, the armed forces, the commissary agencies, and the American Logistics Association (ALA).

Initially, the services' major commands, and then their commissary agencies, created annual "Best Store" awards to boost pride and morale. The U.S. Army

Troop Support Agency (TSA) presented its large CONUS stores a rotating trophy that was three feet tall (*see page 310*). All winners and nominees received plaques to keep permanently. Unique plaques given to TSA stores in Europe were made of handcrafted copper. The Air Force Commissary Service's (AFCOMS') best stores received large silver bowls, or plaques bearing faux loving cups,* for permanent display. Small bowls went to the runners-up, and plaques were given for "best departments." The Navy Resale and Service Support Office (NAVRESSO) and the Marine Corps Commissary Office awarded exquisite loving cups on a permanent basis, and NAVRESSO rotated a special cup among its winners.

TSA began its Best Commissary Awards in 1977 with a lone award for "Best Store, Worldwide," which in 1985 expanded to honor the best overseas store, as well CONUS stores, large and small. These awards were named for Congressman Bill Nichols (D-Alabama), a member of the House Armed Services Committee (HASC) from 1968 until his death in 1988. Nichols chaired HASC panels on Commissaries & Exchanges and Non-Appropriated Funds, as well as the Investigations and Military Personnel and Compensation subcommittees, and was a member of the Readiness and Research & Development subcommittees.

The Air Force began presenting awards in 1970, and for six years gave a single award for best store or best complex, worldwide. With the arrival of AFCOMS in 1976, multiple awards were bestowed for stores



2003: Giuseppe Ricci (left), store director at Livorno (Italy) and Bonnie Kanitz, director of the European Region, congratulate Mike Yaksich, store director at the Tyndall (Florida) Air Force Base commissary during the DeCA 2003 awards banquet. Yaksich's store had just been announced as the Best Large Store (CONUS). Ricci's store, in Kanitz's region, had already received the Best Small Store (OCONUS) award. DeCA photo: Gerri Young

overseas and in CONUS and were named for Congressman L. Mendel Rivers (D-South Carolina), chairman of the HASC in the 1960s. Throughout his career, Rivers took an active role in preserving the commissary benefit, and took special interest in enlisted personnel. As to AFCOMS itself, the agency and everyone who worked for it were honored with the Air Force Organizational Excellence Award (twice, 1976-79 and 1985-86) and the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award (1981-83), awards that added three streamers to the AFCOMS flag.**

NAVRESSO named its Awards for Commissary Excellence for Richard M. Paget, a retired Navy captain who in 1946 had been a member of the first Navy Resale Advisory Committee, which served as a board of directors for the Navy Ships Store Office (NSSO). Influential in NSSO's formation, Paget remained on the board for over forty years, and had a lasting positive influence on Navy morale and welfare.

The Marines initiated their best commissary awards in the 1980s, naming them for Congressman Dan Daniel (D-Virginia), a steadfast backer of the commissary benefit whose career paralleled that of Congressman Nichols. Like Nichols, Daniel was a member of the House Armed Services Committee from his election in 1968 until his death in 1988. He served as the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee's Subcommittee on Readiness, and also chaired the Subcommittee's Panel on Morale, Welfare, and Recreation.

Awards were not limited to stores. Commissary personnel were also eligible for individual recognition. This practice was most prolific within

* — A "loving cup" is a traditional trophy with two or more handles; it originated centuries ago as a large drinking cup with two or more handles that was passed from guest to guest at formal banquets, particularly at wedding feasts.

** — The AFCOMS and TSA flags are displayed in the DeCA headquarters building, as are the TSA rotating trophy and examples of all the awards mentioned here.

the Air Force, where AFCOMS civilians and uniformed personnel could receive the Air Force Association's (AFA's) "Horn of Plenty" awards, honoring those who made outstanding contributions to AFCOMS. Air Force military personnel were also recognized by AFA's Blue Suit Awards, and by AFCOMS' Outstanding Junior Officer, Senior NCO, NCO, and Airman of the Year awards. In 1986, these were named for Dan Daniel, the same man honored by the Marines' Best Store trophies. Similarly, TSA named an "Outstanding NCO of the Year," and NAVRESSO had a "Navy Resale System Sailor of the Year." Each agency selected its candidates for service-wide awards from among these winners.

DeCA's Best Commissary Awards, first presented at the annual ALA convention in 1992, preserve the heritage of its predecessors by honoring the same men those organizations had honored: the Bill Nichols award for the Best Large Store, CONUS; the Richard M. Paget Award for Best Small Store, CONUS; the Dan Daniel Award for Best Large Store, OCONUS; and the L. Mendel Rivers Award for Best Small Store, OCONUS. For the 2004 competition, DeCA added the "Directors Award" for the Best Superstore. From 1992 to 2004, the trophies were large silver bowls engraved with names of the winners. The other nominees, the best in each region, received smaller bowls. Beginning in 2005, DeCA's trophies became loving cups rather than bowls.

DeCA's regions recognize the best individual departments among their stores. The categories usually include best grocery, meat, produce, and customer-service departments, as well as the best merchandising program. Region directors have the discretion to establish additional means of recognition, such as "Special Achievements" or "Most Improved Commissary," to honor individual stores' outstanding efforts or services in a given year. Merchandising awards have taken different forms over the years, from regional recognition to worldwide honors for the marketing business unit's merchandising contest, presented from 1995 to 1999.

Today, DeCA continues to honor individuals. Presented from 1991 to 1996, DeCA's Outstanding Enlisted Awards were given in three categories: junior, intermediate, and senior enlisted. These were discontinued when almost all of DeCA's military slots were eliminated. From 1996 to 1999, DeCA presented thirty-four World Class Customer Service Awards based upon input received from customers who testified to outstanding service by DeCA personnel. Individuals were honored for "above and beyond" assistance to patrons—retrieving lost purses, loaning customers money to buy their groceries, and even assisting in childbirth or saving the lives of customers who suffered heart attacks while in the stores.

The most prestigious of DeCA's awards for individuals is the Michael W. Blackwell Leadership Award, named for Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Michael W. Blackwell, DeCA's second senior enlisted advisor and winner of DeCA's first Senior Enlisted Award in 1991.



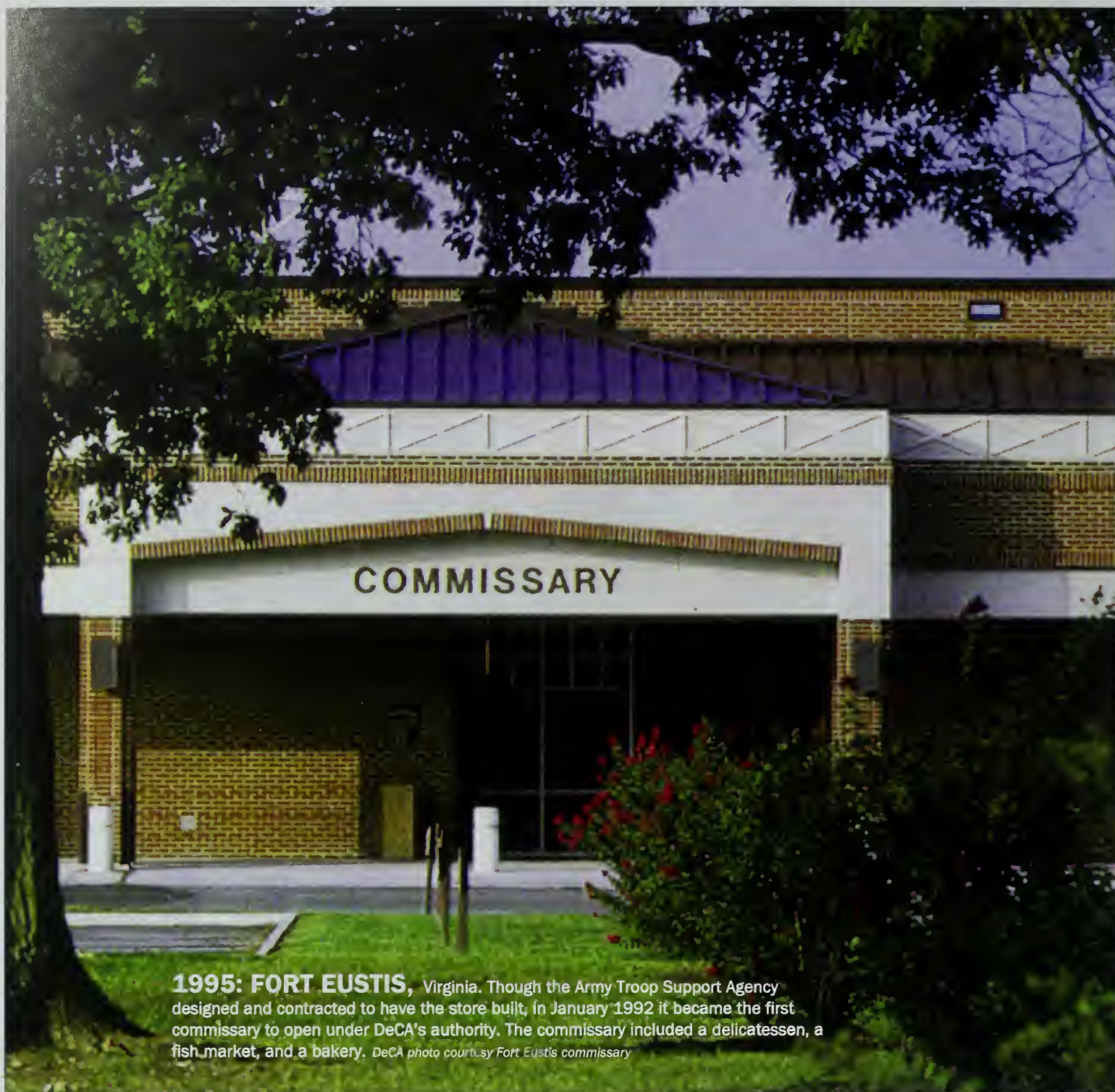
1992: Enlisted of the Year winners pose with Maj. Gen. John P. Dreska, DeCA director (left) and Deputy Director Roy Speight (far right). Holding trophies are (from left), Airman 1st Class Clinton E. Abell, Dyess Air Force Base, Texas, Junior Enlisted of the Year; Staff Sgt. Charles E. Minter, Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma, Intermediate Enlisted; and Chief Petty Officer Ramon M. Galang, Naval Air Station Miramar, California, Senior Enlisted. *DeCA historical file*



1995: MBU Best Merchandising Award. Maj. Gen. Richard E. Beale Jr., DeCA director, presents the 1995 MBU Best Merchandising Award to Commissary Officer Sandy Horan of Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, California. *DeCA historical file*

Blackwell, an accomplished serviceman and a very popular individual, succumbed to cancer in April 1995, at the age of forty-four. The award named for him was first presented in November 1995. All DeCA employees are eligible for it, and it has been won by zone managers, commissary officers and store directors, a region senior enlisted advisor, and a commissary product coordinator.

— For lists of all known award recipients, see *Appendices*.



1995: FORT EUSTIS, Virginia. Though the Army Troop Support Agency designed and contracted to have the store built, in January 1992 it became the first commissary to open under DeCA's authority. The commissary included a delicatessen, a fish market, and a bakery. DeCA photo courtesy Fort Eustis commissary

parent stores. When the Air Force phased out the station's missions, the installations closed and so did the stores, since the entire active-duty population left.

Despite their diminutive size, the commissaries had been intensely popular. While they were built to support small active-duty military populations, many of their customers actually were retirees and reservists. Remarkably, some of these customers traveled from as far as two hundred miles away on monthly shopping trips, eloquently tes-

tifying to the importance of the benefit. Other customers came on foot or on bicycle from base housing, as often as three or four times per day. "We're like a corner store for base housing," said Kevin Foster, Forsyth's store manager, in 1993. "We get a lot of small sales right after deliveries, because everyone can see when the truck arrives."

Among overseas stores DeCA had to close due to national policy were those that remained in Panama, along with a central

distribution center (CDC) and a cold storage facility. The stores in the former Canal Zone and surrounding nearby communities had once numbered in the dozens, but by 1995 only three were left: Corozal, Fort Gulick/Espinar, and Howard Air Force Base. All had to close by noon on December 31, 1999, when the United States would officially turn over the bases and the Panama Canal itself to the people and government of Panama, due to the Carter-Torrijos treaty of 1977.

Of the last three stores, the first to close had been Fort Espinar (formerly known as Fort Gulick), which had first opened in 1941. It had been transferred to Panama on October 1, 1984, with the exception of community services buildings—including the commissary—and family housing. The commissary, originally built in 1942, remained open until August 1, 1995, when the remainder of the post was returned to Panama. The Corozal store near Panama City had served Americans at least since 1934, but it closed, along with the nearby CDC, on August 31, 1999. The Howard Air Force Base store, located on the southwest side of the canal, was the last of the three to shut its doors, on September 15, 1999.

EUROPE AND ASIA

As a direct result of the ending of the Cold War, there were more stores closed in Europe than in any other geographical area. This was a direct result of the redeployment of forces and of the desire to reap the peace dividend—even though it wasn't yet clear how things were actually going to progress in the old Soviet Union.

Many unique facilities were among the store closures. The store at Munich, which was truly one-of-a-kind with its murals and interior fountains, was among the first to close in Germany. The rented facility in Oslo, Norway, and the store in Ankara, Turkey, both closed in 1994 (a newer facility would open in Ankara six years later). Iraklion, Crete, set in one of the most beautiful of all commissary locations, closed the same year. Royal Oaks and Torrejon, in Spain, E. J. Janota's store in downtown Athens, Greece, and dozens of stores in Germany were locked and shuttered by 1999. In the Atlantic, Argentia (Newfoundland) and Bermuda, which dated to the days of America's Atlantic partnership with Great Britain during World War II, also shut their doors.

Not as many stores closed in Asia, but the last two that shut down in the Philippines—San Miguel and Subic Bay—harkened back to a U.S. presence that had lasted nearly a hundred years. The stores in South Korea were likely to undergo major transformations, as troops would soon be

redeployed in that country.

Closures would continue after 1999. A new BRAC round would surface in 2005. (*All closures are listed in the Appendices.*)

STORE OPENINGS, 1991-1999

Although BRAC closed many stores, other locations were able to open new or heavily-renovated facilities. DeCA's original construction goal in 1991 had been to be "built out" by 2000, meaning that all stores run by the agency would be new or recently upgraded or remodeled by the year 2000. By the end of 1999, the goal had not quite been achieved, but the agency had opened sixty-five new facilities, and dozens more were remodeled. Of the new buildings, most were replacements for obsolete stores, but several were built at entirely new locations. One, at Kodiak, Alaska, was acquired from the Coast Guard in 1996, and dozens more were remodeled. (*A list of new store openings is in the Appendices.*)

Each new store opened with great fanfare, and each was special or unique in its own way, both in appearance and in the reasons it was being built. The first twenty stores opened under DeCA had actually been designed and contracted by the separate services' commissary organizations. The first new store to open under DeCA, the commissary at Fort Eustis, Virginia, was actually the first of four stores opened under DeCA that had begun as Army Troop Support Agency projects. The Beale Air Force Base, California, commissary that opened in 1992 was the first of six new DeCA stores that had been started by the Air Force Commissary Service (AFCOMS). DeCA also opened seven stores begun by the Navy Resale Service Support Office (NAVRESSO), the first of which opened in 1992 at Naval Base Mayport, Florida. Three new stores had been started by the Marine Corps commissary program, the first of which opened at Camp Pendleton, California, in 1993. When Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, opened in 1994, it was the first commissary that was entirely DeCA-designed, contracted, and built. (*See Appendix 13 for a complete list of store openings under DeCA.*)

A NEW, CORPORATE LOOK

Because so many of DeCA's stores were new or remodeled, agency leadership saw an opportunity to improve the image of the agency and its stores by adopting a standard, agency-wide décor package. Store individualism had been something left behind with the separate services' commissary programs. Now the goal was to unite them, in the eye of the consumer, and DeCA knew that commonality in interior appearance among all stores would help create a united, corporate image that would make patrons more comfortable in their new stores following permanent changes of station. The standard décor package would also enhance the agency's worldwide nature.

After months of proposals, discussions, designs, considerations, debates, and reconsiderations, DeCA settled on a scheme that began making its way into the stores in July 1998. Customer service signage used Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force themes, depending upon the host service for the installation each commissary served. Colors and graphics directing customers to various departments within the store were consistent throughout the system. These standard designs fostered a corporate look that commissaries had never before achieved.

THE VOICE OF THE CUSTOMER

New stores and attractive décor meant nothing if their patrons were unsatisfied with the commissaries' performance. Knowing this, Beale created a consumer advocate position in 1998 to have one person responsible for communicating with and responding to all DeCA consumer groups. The consumer advocate was to serve as a "listening post" for the customer and facilitate communication between the agency and its customers. Simultaneously, Beale spearheaded the formation of a retiree council, later known as the patron council, to begin mutually beneficial two-way communication between the agency and its retiree customers. The council members first gathered at DeCA headquarters in November 1998 to exchange ideas.

Members were also given a behind-the-scenes tour of the Fort Lee commissary.

The council started exclusively with retirees, but it later grew into the patron council, which included active-duty personnel as well as members of the Guard and Reserves. Emphasis later shifted to individual installations' focus groups, made up primarily of young military families and single service members.

POST-COLD WAR EXPERIMENTS

With the end of the Cold War came base realignments and closings (BRAC) as well as military "draw downs" as the nation cut its military and its bases. As efforts were made in this direction, DeCA was determined to adjust to a new world while continuing to provide the benefit.

One proposal to keep the benefit alive at posts that were closed, but had a large number of retiree, Guard, and Reserve customers living in the immediate area, was to turn old commissaries into "BXMarts." These were seen as political solutions to large customer groups that were disenfranchised by BRAC.

Essentially, the Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) would take over management of old commissaries and turn them into combined commissary/exchanges, funded by non-appropriated dollars but assisted by DeCA on the grocery side of the building.

The best-known BXMarts were those at Carswell Air Force Base, Texas, and Homestead Air Force Base, Florida. When Carswell closed in 1993, the installation became known as "Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Carswell Field, Fort Worth, Texas." Its BXMart opened four days after the commissary closed. Homestead, closed by Hurricane Andrew in 1992, took on new life as an Air Force Reserve Base, and soon had a BXMart occupying its former commissary. A similar experiment, called a "ComEx," was conducted overseas at Robinson Barracks, Germany. These stores were unable to show much profit, an important consideration to the exchanges, which do not receive appropriated funds. As this book went to press, the BXMart experiment was ending. The store at Homestead would be converted to a regu-

lar BX, while the Fort Worth store was being returned to DeCA, to once again function as a full-fledged commissary.

NEW VISITOR POLICY

In October 1999, after Beale left DeCA and before the new director arrived, the Defense Commissary Operating Board approved a new policy aimed at making life easier for DeCA patrons—particularly older patrons needing assistance in shopping or even at simply arriving at the store. The policy was a break with tradition because it allowed people not eligible to shop in the commissary to enter the stores. The "catches" were that they could not shop; they were there to accompany, and perhaps to assist, eligible shoppers.

The board intended to improve access for customers who needed assistance to shop in, or drive to, the commissary. It also helped those who wished to shop but did not want to leave non-eligible friends, aged parents, or other individuals by themselves, either at home or inside a vehicle in the parking lot.

The policy was an immediate godsend for disabled or aging patrons, who needed assistance both in getting to the store, and in moving around inside the store. Such customers were now able to enjoy the use of the benefit; without it, they may not have been able to shop there at all. But traditionally minded shoppers predictably disliked the policy, saying that patrons would be sorely tempted to purchase goods for their non-eligible friends. Others countered that a person who was going to be dishonest with their friend there was just as likely to be dishonest by themselves. The policy remains in effect as of 2007. If there was a "lesson learned" from this policy's implementation, it was that there were likely to be wildly differing reactions to any change in commissary policy, because—as always—there were varying philosophies as to how the commissary benefit could best be administered.



2001: VISITOR'S POLICY. Evelyn McDonald (left), the spouse of a retiree, shopped at the Defense Supply Center, Richmond (DSCR) commissary in Virginia—locally known as the "Bellwood" commissary—thanks to her friend and driver, Bernice Blount. The DeCA visitors' policy enabled McDonald to bring a person not eligible to shop into the store to assist her.

DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt

Military Food Inspectors

AT ONE TIME, commissaries were run exclusively by people in uniform. Today, the only uniformed people to be seen in a commissary are those who are customers, with two exceptions: Army Veterinary Services personnel and Air Force public health inspectors. They are not members of the commissary staff, but the stores could not function successfully without them. Their task is to inspect food before it is placed in the store for sale.

While they look carefully at meat and produce, they also watch for any packages, bottles or cans that have been damaged in shipment. It is their goal to intercept any foodstuff, from all sources, that may have had its wholesomeness compromised. Usually, they will find only isolated cases of damage or spoilage, but if they discover consistent shortcomings with products from any particular source, their inspections may serve as the basis for refunds or contract terminations.

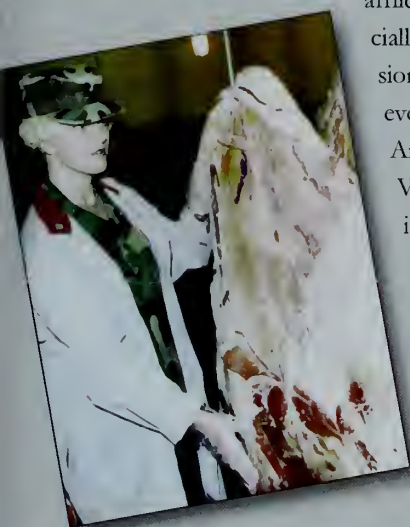
Traditionally, the Army always had plenty of veterinarians to provide medical care for cavalry and artillery horses, mules, draft animals (primarily oxen), and pets, as well as poultry and livestock that were kept at forts to supplement the food supply. The post veterinarians had always informally inspected food wherever they were stationed. It was a logical duty assignment, since veterinarians were schooled in the maladies that would

afflict livestock. Still, they were not officially assigned the food inspection mission until the Spanish-American War, and even then shared this duty with the Army Medical Corps. The Army Veterinary Corps, officially established in 1916, assisted medical personnel during World War I by inspecting garrison food at home, field rations overseas, and food sold by the commissaries at home and overseas.

During the Great Depression, the Army Reserve helped to administer the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), and the vets' responsibilities expanded to include the inspection of the CCC's food. During World War II, more than 2,200 Veterinary Corps offi-

cers and 6,000 enlisted soldiers provided meat and dairy inspections, as well as insect and rodent control and animal medical care.

In 1949, as part of the effort to separate itself from its parent service, the Air Force established its own veterinary corps. Animal care, including the inoculation and other care of service families' pets and military working dogs, was only a small part of their job. They were responsible for the safety and sanitation of base water supplies and housing, as well as rodent and pest control, and monitoring for environmental sanitation, waste management, animal diseases, and toxic chemicals. They were in charge of occupational health and safety programs, and biological and chemical warfare defense. Air Force vets began inspecting food at every point of the process from food production to preparation and consumption, and this included commissary food.



1994: COROZAL, Panama. Medical food inspector Lori Clopper examines a beef carcass. Photo courtesy Corozal commissary



2002: QUANTICO, Virginia. Chief Warrant Officer Second Class Edwin Velez, a veterinary service technician, inspects grapes in the commissary at Marine Corps Base Quantico. DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt

In 1980, Congress made the Army Veterinary Corps executive agent for all DoD veterinary duties, including food inspections on Army, Navy, and Marine Corps bases. On Air Force bases that duty was performed by the the Air Force Veterinary Corps, which subsequently became the USAF Environmental Health Service (1981), USAF Military Public Health (1991), and USAF Air Force Public Health (1994). Today, food inspectors, vet service technicians, and food safety officers who work with commissaries are assisted by DeCA's Army veterinary officer and DeCA's sanitation coordinator. Military inspection standards are high, and food at commissaries receives closer scrutiny than at civilian markets—a fact that increases the benefit's value.



1918: IPPECOURT, France (September 17). U.S. veterinarians inspect carcass beef at the 80th Division's ration dump "B." U.S. Army Signal Corps photo, National Archives

CHRONOLOGY of KEY EVENTS

1991 - 1999

1991

OCTOBER 1991

DeCA ACTIVATION. The agency employed twenty-two thousand people around the world. The number of stores ranged in number from 410 to 431, depending upon how they were counted. (*Ec&C News*, 15 Oct 1991, pp. 3, 137; *Military Market*, Oct 1991, pp. 6; *Military Grocer*, Oct 1991, pp. 31 – 54, and Dec 1991, pp. 29 – 38)

OCTOBER 1991

VISION, a magazine for DeCA employees, was first published by the DeCA public affairs office.

OCT. 2, 1991

THE FIRST BASIC commissary operations course (BCOC) met at DeCA.

OCT. 28 -
NOV. 1, 1991

THE FIRST REGION directors and commanders conference was held at DeCA headquarters.

NOV. 12, 1991

GROUND BREAKING for DeCA's first new commissary took place at Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek, Virginia. This commissary had been designed by the Navy Resale and Services Support Office (NAVRESSO).

NOV. 14, 1991

THE BASE and commissary at Naval Communications Station San Miguel in the Philippines closed due to damage from Typhoon Yunya and the Mount Pinatubo eruption.

DEC. 21, 1991

World History: On this date, the Soviet Union officially ceased to exist. Common opinion was that this officially ended the Cold War.

DEC. 29, 1991

AN AIR FORCE security policeman was killed and a commissary cashier was robbed of the day's receipts while making an after-hours bank deposit at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam. Three of the five perpetrators were arrested, and upon conviction, one received the death penalty.

1992

JAN. 16, 1992

ARMY COL. Bill G. Belcher became DeCA chief of staff, replacing Army Col. William J. Flanagan Jr., who would retire in February. Belcher had served as the last commander of the U.S. Army Troop Support Agency.

JAN. 18, 1992

THE FIRST of a series of fires struck DeCA facilities at the Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, commissary warehouse, causing \$1.2 million in



1991: CHINHAЕ, South Korea. The interior of this Navy commissary, built in 1961, was still clean and colorful thirty years later. Its narrow aisles were a drawback, but this was alleviated by a 1996 renovation that doubled the size of the sales floor.

DeCA photo courtesy Chinhae commissary

JAN. 27, 1992

damage. Volunteer cleanup efforts allowed the store to reopen in five days.

NINE DAYS after the Lackland fire, the Incirlik, Turkey, commissary warehouse was damaged by a fire of undetermined origin.

FEBRUARY 1992

THE FIRST DeCA Today, a video news magazine production from the DeCA Public Affairs Office, was distributed to the field.

FEBRUARY-
MARCH 1992

World Events: Civil war engulfed the Balkans as Yugoslavia was divided into Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Croatia, and Slovenia.

FEB. 25, 1992

REPRESENTATIVES of thirteen major manufacturing companies visited DeCA for a detailed look at DeCA headquarters operations and, in particular, the agency's bill-paying efforts.

MARCH 26, 1992

A LATE NIGHT fire in the commissary warehouse at Fort Ritchie, Maryland, resulted in minor damage, mostly from the sprinkler system.

APRIL 1, 1992

THE BOLLING Air Force Base commissary, Washington, D.C., opened a Mini-Com. Prior service commissary commands had used this concept (under various names) going back to the

MAY 21, 1992

1950s, but this was the first opened by the new agency.

EFFECTIVE THIS DATE, DeCA renamed its distribution centers to lessen confusion in mailing, shipping, and billings. Cameron Station's distribution center was redesignated Military District of Washington CDC; Warner Robins CDC became Georgia CDC; Newport changed to New England; Puget Sound/Fort Lewis to Sea-Tac (for Seattle-Tacoma); and Norfolk changed to Tidewater. Elsewhere, Camp Lejeune switched to Carolina, Pensacola to Panhandle, San Diego to National City, El Toro to Orange County, Oakland to Golden Gate, Germersheim to Central Germany, Spinelli Barracks to Spinelli, and RAF Lakenheath to United Kingdom. (DeCA news release 92-15b, 26 May 1992)

JUNE 15, 1992

AN IMPENDING strike by a Turkish labor union was about to impact operations at Ankara, Izmir, and Incirlik air bases. Since strikers were allowed on base, everyone would have to vacate the premises at the commissaries. At Incirlik, people stocked up on free Meals, Ready-to-Eat (MREs) from Izmir, and water from Ankara.

JUNE 28, 1992

TWO EARTHQUAKES, registering 7.4 and 6.6 on the Richter scale, hit southern California, damaging several commissaries. Damage was mostly minor, but the store at Marine Corps Air Station El Toro continued to experience power fluctuations, and the store at Norton Air Force Base (only five years old) had to be closed indefinitely due to structural damage.

JUNE 28-29, 1992

A **"SELLING FOOD to DoD"** conference, hosted by Congressman **Les Aspin**, a longtime critic of commissaries, took place in Illinois.

JULY 1992

DeCA MADE more than \$500 million in payments this month, reducing backlogged bills to \$66 million. (DeCA news release 92-25a, 4 Aug 1992)

JULY 31, 1992

DeCA DIRECTIVE 40-7 specified policies and procedures for DeCA's continuing operation of Navy exchange marts, also known as location commissaries, location stores, and NEXMARTS.

AUG. 24, 1992

HURRICANE ANDREW hit Homestead Air Force Base, Florida, with winds of 160 miles per hour. All buildings were either destroyed or heavi-



1992: PATRONS

at Fort Eustis, Virginia. The Fort Eustis Commissary had recently had its grand opening in 1992. According to Gerri Young, then Central Region public affairs officer, this photograph was one of several hundred shot by a team of two civilian Air Force photographers who worked with her for two days at Fort Eustis. "I'm sure it is the single most used photo we took during those two days," she said. "The Marine had just received four shots in his arm prior to deploying, and it hurt with every move he made. He was every bit a proud Marine because he stood at near attention the whole time he was in the store. I told him he had better breathe before he passed out!" Young, the camera crew and the service members stayed in the store from 6:30 a.m. until almost midnight that day to photograph every possible angle. The airman pictured second from the right is Sgt. Michael Buchanan, and the soldier pictured at right was then-Sgt. 1st Class Eustice Mitchell; both worked at DeCA's Central Region, located on the Little Creek Naval Base, Virginia Beach, Virginia. "It was an exciting morning and truly a 'camcord' moment to have the magnitude of representing the four military branches," Mitchell recalls. The picture was put on flyers and was sent to stores DeCA-wide. Mitchell retired from the military in 1996 and was later hired to work for DeCA as a civilian commissary management specialist.

DeCA photo courtesy Gerri Young



1993: AVON PARK, Florida. AFCOMS opened this attractive facility in 1984. Within a year of the day this photo was taken, it was closed by BRAC actions.

DeCA photo: Carole Fowler

AUG. 27, 1992

ly damaged. The commissary, which lost part of its roof, was in better shape than most structures.

TYPHOON OMAR hit Guam, causing damage to commissaries at Andersen Air Force Base and Naval Station Guam.

SEPT. 13, 1992

THE STORE at Naval Base Subic Bay, the last commissary in the Philippines, closed due to political realities and the damage wrought by Typhoon Yunya and eruption of Mount Pinatubo (*see feature, pp. 364-65*).

**SEPT. 28 -
OCT. 3, 1992**

THE AMERICAN Logistics Association convention in San Francisco was the first ALA event in which DeCA participated. DeCA's first Best Commissary awards were presented there.

OCT. 1, 1992

STARTING THIS date, national buys and promotions were managed out of DeCA headquarters, rather than from the regions. (DeCA news release 92-187, 29 May 1992)

OCT. 15, 1992

DeCA MILITARY personnel established a tactical field exchange (TFE) in Mombassa, Kenya, to assist the United Nations humanitarian effort in Somalia, Joint Task Force Provide Relief. (DeCA news release 92-34, 15 Oct 1992; *Vision*, May/Jun 1993, pp. 16-18)

OCT. 19-20, 1992

FIRST DeCA PRIME FARE Rodeo Competition took place at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, for agency's Air Force troop support personnel.

NOV. 16, 1992

THE BILL-PAYING backlog, which had reached a high of \$403 million the previous winter, was down to \$33 million.

NOV. 30, 1992

MAJ. GEN. John P. Dreska, due to retire January 1, passed the DeCA directorship to **Army Maj. Gen. Richard E. Beale Jr.**, previously the commander of the Defense Personnel Support Center in Philadelphia.

DEC. 4, 1992

U.S. Military History: President George H. W. Bush announced he was sending up to **twenty-eight thousand U.S. troops** to Somalia to help provide humanitarian relief in the war-torn country where thousands of people had died of starvation.

1993

JANUARY 1993

DeCA PERSONNEL began deploying directly to Somalia in support of tactical field exchanges for Operation Restore Hope. (*Vision*, May/Jun 1993, pp. 16-18)

JANUARY 1993

AT THE ALA'S Western Roundtable, Will Cofer, longtime professional staffer for the House Armed Services Committee, said merging the commissaries with the exchanges was the only way to preserve the commissary benefit, given the prevailing climate of budget cuts. (*Vision*, Mar/Apr 1993, pp. 7-8; *Military Market*, Nov. 1993, pp. 90-95)

JAN. 4, 1993

THE FIRST advanced commissary operations course (ACOC) met at DeCA headquarters.

FEB. 17, 1993

A NEW commissary opened at Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek, Virginia. Although it had been designed under NAVRESSO, this was the first



1993: THE SOMALIA tactical field exchange express checkout at the university site, Mogadishu. The Air Force recruiting slogan is stenciled on the counter because DeCA TFE personnel were all members of the Air Force. Manning the desk is Tech Sgt. Rafael Serrati, who deployed to Somalia from Altus Air Force Base, Oklahoma.

DeCA photo courtesy Capt. Ron Smith

1993: VANCE Air Force Base, Oklahoma. Even from the air, this store's design stood out as one of the most attractive and unusual of any commissary in the world. In this photo, the commissary is on the left, the exchange on the right. The Vance store, opened by AFCOMS in 1984, looks as modern today as it did two decades ago.

DeCA photo courtesy Vance commissary



store to be built entirely by DeCA, from ground-breaking to grand opening.

FEB. 26, 1993

International Terrorism: A bomb exploded in the basement garage of the North Tower of the World Trade Center in New York. The blast killed seven people and injured 1,040.

MAY 1993

IMPLEMENTATION began on delivery ticket invoicing (DTI), starting on a store-by-store basis.

MAY 18, 1993

DeCA RECEIVED the Government Award from the National Industries for the Severely Handicapped (NISH) for its efforts in hiring individuals who were physically challenged.

JUNE 1993

THE 1992 MARKET BASKET Price Comparison Study found an average commissary customer savings of **24.3 percent** without tax and surcharge [23.4 percent savings with the tax and/or surcharge]. (Wirthlin 1992 Report, Executive Summary, p. 2)

JUNE 1993

CHARLES M. WIKER, formerly the director of the European Region, became the agency's chief executive officer (a position formerly called deputy director). He replaced **Roy Speight**, who moved to Fort Lewis, Washington, to become Director of the Northwest/Pacific Region. Speight replaced Army **Col. Ray Ansel**, who retired in May. Army **Col. Jesse Tolleson** replaced Wiker in Europe.

JUNE 1993

DeCA ANNOUNCED that by late 1996, the agency would reduce its authorized military workforce from 1,849 to 18. Another 384 slots the Navy used for ship-to-shore-rotations would also be

JUNE 28 -

AUG. 1, 1993

eliminated. DeCA would transfer its troop-support function to the Air Force on October 1, 1995.

NEXCOM MOVED from its offices at Staten Island, New York, where the Navy commissary headquarters had been located from July 1981 to October 1, 1991. NEXCOM, now running Navy exchanges and a number of NEXMARTS (with food supplied by DeCA) moved into the Beverly Building, a rented facility in Virginia Beach, Virginia. (*Military Market*, May 1993, p. 19; Aug 1993, p. 15)

AUG. 18, 1993

A FIRE at the Vogelweh, Germany, commissary caused more than \$2.2 million in damage.

SEPT. 7, 1993

DIBS, the DeCA Interim Business System, a computerized system for ordering and tracing the sale of groceries, went online in the Southwest Region.

SEPT. 14-18, 1993

DeCA DIRECTOR Maj. Gen. Richard E. Beale Jr. met with Maj. Gen. Robert F. Swarts, commander of AAFES, and Rear Adm. John T. Kavanaugh, commander of NEXCOM, regarding cooperative efforts between the agencies.

OCT. 3-4, 1993

U.S. Military History: Eighteen American soldiers, members of the U.N. Peacekeeping Forces, were killed in a fifteen-hour gun battle with Somali rebels in Mogadishu, Somalia. This was the infamous "**Black Hawk Down**" incident. As a result, Congress called for the withdrawal of American troops. On October 7, **President Bill Clinton** announced a March deadline for their withdrawal. This marked the end of DeCA's TFE mission in Somalia.

NOV. 19, 1993

CAROLYN BECRAFT was sworn in as the deputy assistant secretary for personnel support, families, and education, making her DeCA's new "boss" in Washington. She would be the head of the Defense Commissary Advisory Board.

1994

1994

World Events: More than one million Rwandans were massacred during attacks led by the Hutu ethnic majority upon the minority Tutsis. Hundreds of thousands of Tutsi refugees fled the country, many fleeing to neighboring Zaire. The violence soon erupted into a full-scale civil war.

JAN. 1, 1994

DeCA ALTERED its ID policy. The official U.S. military uniform became the positive means of identification for active-duty commissary shoppers. However, military family members, and members of the National Guard and Reserves, uniformed or not, still had to present current ID and commissary privilege cards, or active-duty orders, in order to shop. (*Vision*, Feb 1994, p. 5)

JAN. 17, 1994

AN EARTHQUAKE in southern California caused product damage in several commissaries. However, since this was the Martin Luther King, Jr., federal holiday, all the stores were able to clean up the damage and reopen the next day, without any lost store hours.

FEB. 28, 1994

Military History: U.S. F-16 fighters shot down four Bosnian Serb warplanes violating a "no-fly" zone in central Bosnia. This was the first combat action ever taken by NATO in its forty-five-year history.

MARCH 8, 1994

THE NEW store opened at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, was the first commissary that was entirely a DeCA design/build project. All previous stores opened under DeCA had been designed by the services.

MARCH 14, 1994

THE LAST DeCA personnel were withdrawn from Somalia. Troop support activity had included operation of several

tactical field exchanges, both stationary and mobile. Eighty DeCA personnel had served in Somalia or in support operations in Kenya and in Cairo, Egypt. No DeCA people had been injured during this deployment, although there had been several close calls.

MARCH 15, 1994

THE DoD INSPECTOR general, along with Maj. Gen. Richard E. Beale Jr., Carolyn Becraft, a military retiree, and several active-duty military spouses, testified to the House Armed Services' Subcommittee on Readiness regarding the importance of, and the need for, commissaries. Subsequently, on March 16, Beale held a special meeting of headquarters supervisors to relate his optimism that because of the previous day's hearings, "the future of the [commissary] benefit has been secured."

MARCH 21, 1994

AIR FORCE Chief Master Sergeant Michael Blackwell became DeCA's second senior enlisted advisor, replacing Chief Master Sgt. Russ Moffett, who was retiring.

MARCH 24, 1994

DeCA LEARNED the Congressional Budget Office was recommending that after fiscal 1995, commissaries no longer be supported by federal funds. This was touted as a move to make the commissaries self-supporting.

MARCH 28, 1994

DEPUTY Secretary of Defense John Deutsch nominated DeCA as a pilot project under the



1993: EGLIN, Air Force Base, Florida. The spirited cashier crew at Eglin was one of many reasons that the commissary earned more than its share of awards.

DeCA photo courtesy Eglin commissary

Government Performance and Results Act of 1995. (DeCA news release 9-94, 1 Apr 1994) The nomination was forwarded to **Leon Panetta**, director of the Office of Management and Budget.

MARCH 31, 1994

THE DeCA Interim Business System (DIBS) was online everywhere except Puerto Rico.

APRIL 1994

THE DeCA Savings Analysis Group (SAG), also called the Strategic Analysis Group, proposed an above-store-level reorganization to improve operations and reduce overhead costs. Included among the recommendations was a reduction of CONUS regions from six to three. (*Vision*, Apr 1994, p. 4)

APRIL 1, 1994

COMPLYING with rulings by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) and the Comptroller General of the United States, DeCA temporarily raised the prices on cartons of cigarettes. The six-week price hike was levied to pay a one-time floor stock tax on cigarettes. The increase amounted to 40 cents per carton— 4 cents per pack.

MAY 10, 1994

THE HOUSE Armed Services Committee reported to the full House, “military commissaries are an important non-pay compensation benefit,” and noted DoD “has a number of cost-saving initiatives underway that will effect [sic] the level of benefits provided.” Concerned, the committee directed “(1) No commissaries are to be closed at a non-closing base without notifying Congress ninety days in advance of the proposed closure date; (2) no major product category can be deleted from the stock assortment without notifying Congress ninety days in advance; and (3) no adjustments can be made to the types of expenditures made by surcharge funds without notifying Congress ninety days in advance.”

The committee said that the surcharge was to be used only for “construction, including repair and maintenance; purchase and maintenance of equipment; purchase of supplies; utilities in the United States; and [product] shrinkage.”

JULY 1, 1994

THE EUROPEAN Region was realigned from four districts to two: the Wurzburg (Germany) and



1994: CARLISLE BARRACKS, Pennsylvania. Army Capt. Jo Ann Reagan checks out a few items after making a quick stop at the new Carlisle Barracks commissary store on her way home. DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt

SEPT. 19, 1994

Mediterranean Districts.

U.S. Military History: A U.S.-led multinational force—Operation Uphold Democracy—of twenty-one thousand soldiers began deploying to Haiti to apply pressure to the local military regime that had violently ousted **President Jean-Bertrand Aristide** from office. A last-minute agreement with the regime led to the unopposed occupation by troops from a dozen countries. Within weeks, the coup leaders had stepped down and Aristide returned to Haiti on October 15.

OCT. 1, 1994

BEGINNING OF a six-month test of a joint venture with AAFES: selling magazines at commissaries located on Army and Air Force installations in the United States. (*Vision News Update*, Jul 1994, p. 2)

OCT. 14, 1994

A JOINT DeCA-AAFES tactical field exchange (TFE) opened in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, to support U.S. troops sent to keep the peace during Haitian unrest. On October 21, another TFE opened, this one in Cap-Haitien. DeCA assigned twenty personnel to operations in Haiti, led by Air Force Capt. Clayton McAnally. (*Vision*, Nov 1994, p. 5)

OCT. 17, 1994

DeCA ANNOUNCED its zone manager program, and began accepting applications for thirty-

two positions. (DeCA news release 29-94, 20 Oct 1994)

OCT. 29, 1994

BY MUTUAL AGREEMENT of DeCA and the station commander, the commissary at Naval Weapons Station Yorktown, Virginia, closed because of its lack of modern features—for example, lack of heat—and the extensive engineering work needed for upgrading, for which no funds were available. Six other commissaries were available in the nearby area. The closure became official on Jan. 1, 1995. This was the first store DeCA closed of its own volition.

NOVEMBER 1994

U.S. Military History: President Clinton authorized the deployment of several thousand U.S. troops to help bring food and water to hundreds of thousands of Rwandan refugees in Zaire.

NOV. 8, 1994

A PILOT PROGRAM allowing commissary shoppers to use credit cards was begun at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. Other stores in the program were Fort Belvoir, Virginia; Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi; Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia; and Naval Air Station Miramar, California. (DeCA news release 24-94, 24 Aug 1994)

NOV. 21, 1994

DeCA ANNOUNCED the selection of the first thirty-two zone managers. On December 1, they officially took over their duties.

DECEMBER 1994

PUBLICATION of an informal opinion poll in

DEC. 5, 1994

Airman magazine showed most Air Force personnel favored keeping their commissary benefit as it was, and they valued it almost as highly as they did their medical benefits. (*Airman*, Dec 1994, p. 44-48)

DEC. 21, 1994

THE FORMATION of the Provisional Operations Center was effective as of this date. The center was supervised by **Bob Tate**, who had been DeCA director of operations (later known as the Operations Support Center, or OSC). It would consist of an acquisition business unit, a marketing business unit, a transportation business unit, an information technology business unit, an analysis and reconciliation business unit, and a budget liaison office. (DeCA news release 28-94, 20 Oct 1994)

DeCA ANNOUNCED the closure of four obsolete commissaries. All were facilities in need of extensive repair, but the expense was deemed to be too high, since there were other, newer stores nearby. The locations to close were Naval Weapons Station Yorktown, Virginia, which had actually closed in October but was not formally closed until January 1, 1995; Fort Story, Virginia; Pope Air Force Base, North Carolina; and Fort McNair, Washington, D.C. Closure of these stores would save a projected \$2 million annually. The Pope store would actually remain open until 2001. (DeCA news release 38-94, 21 Dec 1994)

JAN. 7, 1995

RETIRED AIR FORCE Maj. Gen. Daniel L. Burkett, formerly the first commander of

1995

1995: MALMSTROM

Air Force Base, Montana. The commissary at Malmstrom boosted employees' morale by placing their photos on a "Wall of Fame."

DeCA photo courtesy
Malmstrom commissary





1996: GUNTER Air Force Base, Alabama. Gordon Harris, the commissary officer, and Barbara Sannino, store manager, pose with the DeCA seal as displayed on an oversized doormat at the entrance to the base commissary. DeCA photo: Bonnie Powell

AFCOMS, died of a heart attack at his home in Dallas. He was sixty-nine years old.

FEBRUARY 1995

A **CBO REPORT** repeated the “remote posts” myth: *“Although commissaries were established in 1866 to provide food and related items to the military personnel assigned to remote posts, the current commissary system has far exceeded that original purpose.”* DeCA responded with documentary evidence, dispelling the remote posts notion. CBO agreed to omit such statements in future reports.

FEB. 9, 1995

CHIEF MASTER SGT. Michael W. Blackwell, DeCA’s senior enlisted advisor, retired due to terminal illness. He had spent twenty-two years in the Air Force. Blackwell warned the audience that his greatest regret was not spending more time with his family and cautioned that they not make the same mistake. He passed away April 5, at the age of

forty-four. Later, DeCA’s formal conference room would be named in his honor.

MARCH 1, 1995

THE NATIONAL Industries for the Blind (NIB) honored DeCA for outstanding support of their Skilcraft Products during fiscal 1994.

APRIL 6, 1995

DURING TESTIMONY before the House Committee on National Security’s Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Panel, **Maj. Gen. Richard E. Beale Jr.** pointed out the financial value of the commissaries to the average military family. The DeCA director also stressed the commissaries’ supportive, emotional, morale-boosting value, especially overseas and among CONUS families whose military member was on a remote tour or in combat. (Informal interview, Maj. Gen. Richard E. Beale, Jr., with Dr. Peter D. Skirbunt, DeCA historian, 6 Apr 1995)

APRIL 19, 1995

U.S. History: A truck bomb exploded in front of the **Murrah Federal Building** in Oklahoma City. The explosion **killed 168 people**, including many children. Although international terrorists were the initial suspects, two Americans were convicted of placing the bomb.

MAY 5, 1995

AS A PART of the reorganization set for October 1, some headquarters personnel began moving to the new provisional operations support center in the Nichols II building, a leased facility located near the East Service Center adjacent to Fort Lee, Virginia. Among those making the move were the MBU and numerous operations personnel.

MAY 5, 1995

DECA’S EXECUTIVE steering committee decided to stay with its existing seven-region structure for the foreseeable future because of “unacceptable risks associated with reconfiguring current automated business information systems.” (DeCA news release 18-95, 9 May 1995)

MAY 31, 1995

DeCA REGIONS stopped accepting industry merchandising presentations for national-brand items. All promotions, category reviews for national brand items, and new item presentations, would be done exclusively at the operations support center outside Fort Lee, Virginia. (DeCA news release 22-95, 22 May 1995)

JUNE 7, 1995

DeCA RECEIVED the DoD Outstanding Team Award for value engineering from **Noel Longuemare**, principal deputy undersecretary of

defense (acquisition and technology), because the manner in which it was designing and building commissaries had saved an estimated \$18 million in commissary construction costs over a three-year period. (DeCA news release 32-95, 17 Jul 1995)

JULY 31, 1995

INTEGRATED Systems Division, Computer Sciences Corporation, was awarded the basic contract for the Defense Commissary Information System (DCIS). (DeCA news release 41-95, Sep 1995, p. 1)

AUG. 1, 1995

THE OPTION of using credit cards for industry to make payments to DeCA began through the DeCA Vendor Credit Memorandum Credit Card Program.

AUG. 7, 1995

MAJ. GEN. Richard E. Beale Jr. was extended as DeCA director for a year past his original autumn retirement date.

SEPT. 4-6, 1995

HURRICANE LUIS, a category 4 storm, plowed into Antigua and Barbuda in the Leeward islands of the eastern Caribbean, causing extensive damage. At the naval support activity on Antigua, the storm destroyed the NEXMART, which had been supported by DeCA. The store was never rebuilt, and the support facility itself officially closed in October. (Memo, commanding officer, Navy Exchange Service Center, Jacksonville, to commander NEXCOM, 22 Sep 1995, Subject: Disposition of Commissary Inventory at NEXMART Antigua; memo, with attachments, Col. Ronald P. McCoy, DeCA chief of staff, to commander, NEXCOM, 25 Sep 1995, Subject: NEXMART Antigua)

OCT. 1, 1995

THE PROVISIONAL operations support center became permanent. **Bill Mackrain**, previously the director of the European Region, became the OSC director. **John McGowan**, formerly the director of the Southern Region, became the director of the newly reorganized directorate of operations. **Bob Tate**, former director of operations, became director of the European Region.

OCT. 1, 1995

DECA'S TROOP subsistence and readiness division at Midwest Region headquarters, Kelly Air Force Base, Texas, closed, and its Air Force troop



1995: IN YOUR HONOR. Maj. Gen. Richard E. Beale Jr. (left) presents Chief Master Sgt. Michael W. Blackwell a special collage during Blackwell's retirement. The popular chief was suffering from cancer and passed away a few months later. A conference room at DeCA headquarters, as well as an annual leadership award, have been named in Blackwell's honor. DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt

support mission transferred to the Air Force Services Agency, Randolph Air Force Base, Texas. All civilian employees of the old TS&R Division transferred with the mission. Already, 340 DeCA military personnel had been reassigned to the Air Force, with 163 more scheduled to transfer by October 1, 1997. (DeCA news release 43-95, 25 Sep 1995)

OCT. 1, 1995

DeCA ASSUMED responsibility for the Coast Guard commissary located on Kodiak Island, Alaska. The Coast Guard retained facility ownership, but DeCA ran the store with a DeCA-employed commissary officer and deputy. A year later, DeCA took over the store outright.

OCT. 1, 1995

NON-APPROPRIATED fund activities that were charge-sale commissary customers had to start paying for commissary purchases with cash, check, or credit card.

OCT. 6, 1995

CENTRAL REGION headquarters moved from Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek, Virginia, to leased facility in Virginia Beach.

NOVEMBER 1995

Political History: The government of the United States temporarily shut down due to an impasse between president and Congress regarding the federal budget. DeCA could temporarily operate on Defense Business Operating Fund (DBOF)

allocations, but eight hundred thousand federal workers in other agencies were temporarily furloughed. Within a week, a temporary agreement was worked out, and the government recalled furloughed workers.

NOV. 21, 1995

World Events: the Dayton Peace Agreement was initiated at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio (and signed in Paris on December 14, 1995), bringing peace to the former Yugoslavia after more than three years of intense fighting. The agreement opened the door for the subsequent deployment of NATO peacekeepers to Bosnia-Herzegovina. The U.S. supplied more than fifteen thousand troops to Bosnia as part of a fifty-four-thousand-man NATO ground force.

DEC. 4, 1995

A TWO-PHASE Pentagon study, established in October by the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for personnel support, families and education (PSF&E), started to review a September 1995 GAO report to Congress claiming \$319.5 million in appropriated funds could be saved by merging exchanges with commissaries. The study group included four DeCA representatives (Gary Lutz, John McGowan, Art Coleman, and Bill Reade).

The study group was to take ninety days to evaluate the data and another six months to develop

DEC. 5, 1995

alternative resale delivery models, and determine whether those alternatives could deliver the commissary benefit at reduced appropriated fund costs.

DoD ORDERED a new study on privatization be performed by the Defense Science Board.

DEC. 15, 1995

DeCA DEFENDED its position against merging exchanges and commissaries by presenting financial figures that dismissed any consolidation arguments. (Art Coleman and Bill Reade discussion with Dr. Peter D. Skirbunt, 10 Jan 1996)

DEC. 18, 1995

DeCA ANNOUNCED numerous key personnel moves, the most important of which was Northeast Region Director's Patrick Nixon becoming the deputy director of the European Region.

DEC. 21, 1995

MAJ. GEN. Richard E. Beale Jr. briefed the Defense Science Board, which was tasked with investigating the possibilities of privatization within various components of DoD, on DeCA's stand regarding the privatization of the commissaries. The general introduced the concept of gross margins to demonstrate DeCA was far more efficient than civilian-sector grocery stores, and was therefore a better deal for taxpayers than privatized stores.

1995: LAJES FIELD, in the Azores. Few commissaries are as beautiful as the store at Lajes Field. Fewer still can match this view: the bright stucco walls and orange-tiled roofs of the store and surrounding buildings contrasting with the deep, azure waters of the nearby Atlantic Ocean. The Air Force had been in the Azores since 1946, and, shortly after becoming official tenants of the Portuguese air base on Terceira Island in 1950, converted an existing building to a commissary. That store remained in use until the store pictured here opened nearby in 1989. Lajes is nearly a thousand miles from the European mainland and is often isolated by weather conditions, making regular deliveries to the store problematical.

DeCA photo: Ken Perrotte





1996: Grand Opening ceremonies for the new store at Naval Air Weapons Center China Lake, California.

Photo courtesy Cyndy Fultz, China Lake commissary

DEC. 21, 1995

THE AGENCY was presented the **Hammer Award** by **Dr. John J. Hamre**, OSD comptroller, in a ceremony at the Pentagon. The award had been created by **Vice President Al Gore** for government agencies that had demonstrated significant efforts in "reinventing government" by cutting red tape, putting customers first, empowering employees, and returning to basics. (DeCA news release 59-95, 18 Dec 1995)

1996

JAN. 15, 1996

HEAVY SNOW collapsed the roof over the front end of the commissary at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey. This was the **Martin Luther King Jr.**, holiday and the store was closed, so no one was injured. A replacement commissary would be built, opening July 1998. While it was under construction, makeshift operations kept commissary customers supplied with most of their needs.

JAN. 24-25, 1996

THE HOUSE Budget Committee asked the Congressional Budget Office to conduct a comprehensive review of non-appropriated fund and resale activities by the Department of Defense.

FEB. 1, 1996

The CBO would address costs, benefits, and whether there were cheaper alternatives to the existing system that could provide the same level of benefit. The next day, the CBO faxed DeCA headquarters a list of comprehensive questions on costs, sales, benefits, and other issues, such as restrictions upon the commissaries and the impact of appropriated funds.

DeCA's **EUROPEAN** Region closed the con-



1996: BAMBERG, Germany. Constructed sometime before 1925 for the German Army, this building at Warner Barracks became a U.S. commissary in 1952. Shortly after being renovated in 1996, it was named DeCA's Best Small OCONUS Store. It is one of the oldest structures in the DeCA inventory. *DeCA photo by Gerri Young*



1990s: BARBERS POINT, Hawaii. Frank Fruean, sales store checker, checks IDs at Naval Air Station Barbers Point.

DeCA photo courtesy Barber's Point commissary

tractor-owned, government-operated cold storage facility in Bremerhaven, Germany, and relocated to a contractor-owned-and-operated facility in Rotterdam, Netherlands. Projections were that the agency would save up to \$1 million in annual operating costs.

FEB. 14, 1996

AMERICAN TELEPHONE & Telegraph Global Information Solutions (AT&T GIS) of Rockville, Maryland, was awarded a four-year contract for DeCA's point-of-sale modernization (POS-M) program.

FEB. 16, 1996

DeCA LEADERSHIP considered the possibility of the agency becoming a quasi-governmental, performance-based organization, such as the post office. The idea had been presented to **Maj. Gen. Richard E. Beale Jr.** by the DoD Comptroller, **Dr. John Hamre**, who saw this as a way to keep the agency from being a constant target for privatization or closure. (DeCA historian notes, DeCA staff meeting, 16 Feb 1996)

FEB. 23, 1996

DeCA SIGNED a collective bargaining agreement with representatives of the National Association of Government Employees, covering commissaries represented by NAGE. This was the first nationwide union agreement the agency had signed.

MARCH 3, 1996

VICE PRESIDENT Al Gore announced the nomination of several government agencies—

including DeCA, the only DoD agency so nominated—as performance-based organizations (PBOs).

MARCH 27, 1996

A MARKET BASKET survey, conducted by Wirthlin Worldwide, showed customer savings of 29.7 percent, 6.3 percent greater than the '92 survey.

MARCH 27, 1996

FREDERICK PANG, assistant secretary of defense, force management policy, announced that **Stephen O. Rossetti Jr.**, would be **Maj. Gen. Richard E. Beale's** new boss in the military resale arena. Rosetti would be the executive director of morale, welfare, and recreation activities (MWR), as well as resale activities.

JUNE 25, 1996

International Terrorism: A truck bomb exploded outside the **Khobar Towers** military complex in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, **killing nineteen U.S. servicemen** and wounding hundreds of others. In June 2001, thirteen Saudis and a Lebanese, all alleged members of the Islamic militant group Hezbollah, were indicted on charges relating to the attack.

JULY 15-16, 1996

THE NEW point-of-sale modernization (POS-M) system went online at the Fort Lee, Virginia, store. Lessons learned included more time for cashiers to receive hands-on training.

OCT. 1, 1996

IN CEREMONIES held at U.S. Navy Memorial Visitors Center Theater, Washington, D.C., DeCA officially became the first agency within the federal government to be named as a performance-based organization (PBO). This ceremony also officially introduced **Maj. Gen. Richard E. Beale Jr.**, who had retired from the Army the previous day, as the agency's civilian director for the transition to PBO. The event also unveiled DeCA's World Class Customer Service awards, and initiated the SAVER 2000 program, which was aimed at achieving excellence as a PBO.

OCT. 7-10, 1996

FOR THE FIRST time, there were no enlisted awards at the ALA convention due to the military drawdown within DeCA.

OCT. 29, 1996

DeCA SIGNED a memorandum of agreement with AAFES and NEXCOM to institute a new policy on tobacco sales: Cigarettes would still be sold by DeCA stores, but the cigarettes would be "owned" by the exchanges. The new policy went into effect on November 1.



1997: DHAHRAN, Saudi Arabia. This is the interior of the store at Dhahran Air Base, one of two commissaries in Saudi Arabia. On the left is the commissary officer, Murtadha Khan. The store was originally a branch of TSA's Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, commissary in 1975. When this photo was taken, the store was located outside the base, but it moved to on-base locations in 1995, again to a new site in 1996, and to the headquarters building in 1999. It closed on November 30, 2000.

Photo courtesy Murtadha Khan, Dhahran commissary

NOV. 8, 1996

DeCA RECEIVED two more Hammer Awards in a ceremony at the Fort Myer, Virginia, commissary, one for the facilities offices and one for the IG office.

NOV. 25, 1996

DeCA LEGISLATIVE package for being a performance-based organization was delivered to DoD. This started a chain of events that would end several months later with none of DeCA's ideas having been accepted. (DeCA historian, staff meeting notes, 9 May 1997; DeCA/GC memo to DeCA/PA, 16 Jun 1997)

DECEMBER 1996

ERIC SWAYZEE retired as a chief master sergeant from the Air Force at DeCA headquarters. He was the **last enlisted person** who had spent his entire military career as a commissary specialist.

DEC. 11, 1996

THE DEFENSE Business Operating Fund (DBOF) ceased to exist. In its place were the Defense Working Capital Funds (DWCF), one each for the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Defense Agencies. The concept of a single fund for DeCA was approved in PBD 419 (5 Dec 96). The fiscal 1998/99 President's Budget would, therefore, contain a request for establishment of a separate revolving fund, the Military Commissary Fund, effective October 1, 1997.

DEC. 29, 1996

FLOODING FORCED evacuation of Yuba City and Marysville, California, prompting Beale Air

1997

JAN. 27, 1997

Force Base officials to open the base to sixty-five hundred evacuees. The commissary began running on a twenty-four-hour-a-day schedule, providing milk, water, bread, and diapers.

1997

Technology: As of January 1, 43 percent of U.S. homes had computers, and more than 50 million Americans and Canadians used the Internet.

MARCH 7, 1997

THE NEW Defense Commissary Board met for the first time.

MAY 1, 1997

DoD FORMALLY submitted DeCA's PBO legislative proposal to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for administration clearance. (DeCA/GC memo to DeCA/PA, 16 Jun 1997)

MAY 16, 1997

OPERATIONAL control of commissaries in the Central, Northeast, and Southern Regions transferred to the consolidated Eastern Region. The transfer marked the first major step to the eventual consolidation into three regions.

MAY 19, 1997

THE DeCA PBO package was cleared by OMB, and the proposal was forwarded to Congress by DoD. (Memo, DeCA/GC to DeCA/PA, 16 Jun 1997, subj.: PBO Package Chronology)

THE DEFENSE Commissary Board met to discuss options for reducing DeCA's \$48-million

budget shortfall. A working group of military and OSD representatives was appointed to study all the money-saving options for commissaries. The group was to report back to the DCB within a month and recommend a solution to the immediate and long-term funding shortfall.

JUNE 10 and 20, 1997

AT TWO meetings of the Defense Commissary Board, the services considered **expanding hybrid stores** as a long-term solution to funding woes. But eventually, they agreed to solve the fiscal 1997 funding shortfall by reprogramming money, of which \$9.8 million would come from the Air Force, \$9.5 million from the Army, \$4.9 million from the Navy, and \$1.1 million from the Marines.

JULY 21, 1997

THE U.S. Court of Appeals, Fourth Circuit, affirmed the District Court's finding that DeCA could sell scanner data to anyone, and that Market and Management Information, Incorporated (MMI) did not have exclusive right to the data. (Memo, William Sherman to Richard E. Beale, 28 Jul 1997, Subj: Message for General Beale)

AUGUST 1997

DeCA STOPPED selling magazines until January 2002.

SEPT. 4, 1997

THE REAL STORE Experience program began, giving DeCA office workers hands-on training in what it took to run a store.

SEPT. 22, 1997

THE DeCA Web site went online.

SEPT. 23-29, 1997

THE DoD Appropriations Act, H.R. 2266, passed. The legislation included \$100 million that the Congressional Budget Office had taken from DeCA the previous year, based upon projections of savings for PBO initiatives that were never approved. However, it merged funding for operations of DeCA into the Defense Working Capital



1998: ALTUS Air Force Base, Oklahoma. Endcaps, places for large, colorful displays of products being sold at bargain prices, have gotten progressively larger over the years. Compare this photo with the Fort Myer, Virginia, store endcap in 1943 (Vol. 1, p. 129). Here, Winston Bannister poses with a newly completed endcap display.

DeCA photo: Marlin Dotson

Fund rather than including such funding in a separate account.

OCTOBER 1997

CBO RELEASED its study, titled, "The Costs and Benefits of Retail Activities at Military Bases." Alternatives addressed were: (1) leaving everything as it was, (2) creating a DoD nonappropriated funds-like resale authority, (3) relying on private contractors, and (4) revising incentives for DoD resale activities. The report was the main subject of a hearing of the House Special Oversight Panel on Morale, Welfare, and Recreation in March 1998.

1998: MERIDIAN'S new store, constructed at the naval air station by DeCA and opened in 1998, replaced a facility in Mississippi that had been in operation since 1966. *DeCA photo*



NOV. 25, 1997

JOHN MCGOWAN, director of operations, was appointed to the Senior Executive Service.



John F. McGowan

DEC. 10, 1997

BILL MACKRAIN, director of the operations center, retired after thirty-seven years, nine months of federal service.

DEC. 17-18, 1997

SUPERTYPHOON

Paka hit Guam. The highest recorded winds were clocked at 236 mph. The storm pounded the island for twenty-seven hours. There was considerable damage at Andersen Air Force Base and Naval Station Orote, but the commissary at Andersen was able to maintain operations using emergency generators. Orote experienced power loss and loss of some product, but neither store was badly damaged.

1998

1998

Technology: There were an estimated three hundred million World Wide Web pages, with about 1.5 million being added each day.

JAN. 16, 1998

THE NAVY told DeCA it would keep the commissary at Naval Air Station Cecil Field, Florida, open through September 30. This was one of several stores DoD had closed and DeCA was not funded to run. The Navy wanted it to stay open through the end of the fiscal year, so it provided the funding.

MARCH 3, 1998

RICHARD E. BEALE JR. testified before the House Special Oversight Panel on Morale, Welfare, and Recreation concerning the resale system and the Congressional Budget Office report of the previous October. The report was considered, but, ultimately, was rejected because it failed to take into account the benefits favorable impact on recruitment and retention. The outcome was a vote of confidence for DeCA.

MAY 11, 1998

DeCA ANNOUNCED that the contract for the DCIS information system would not be extended past July 31.

JUNE 17, 1998

DeCA RECEIVED the Federal Achievement Award from the President's Quality Award Program.

AUGUST 1998

DeCA ESTABLISHED the consumer advocate position at headquarters in the public affairs office.

AUG. 1, 1998

BRAC PROMPTED the closing of the new, DeCA-built store at Fort Ritchie, Maryland.

AUG. 7, 1998

International Terrorism: Bombs exploded simultaneously at **U.S. embassies** in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar el Islam, Tanzania, **killing 224** people. The bombings were thought to have been carried out under the direction of international terrorist **Osama bin Laden**. The United States responded by bombing terrorist training sites in Afghanistan and the Sudan.

SEPT. 22, 1998

HURRICANE GEORGES hit Puerto Rico. It was a powerful storm, and DeCA was lucky to suffer only minor damage. At Roosevelt Roads the power went off, but the store generators kept things going. The store was open the next day, though chill items were in short supply. The Fort Buchanan store remained closed for two days. Generators ran its refrigeration, but fuel was scarce. There was minor damage to both stores. Loss of power caused spoilage of some chilled and frozen products.

OCT. 1, 1998

THE NATIONAL Defense Authorization Act increased commissary privilege entitlement from 12 to 24 visits per year for selected Reserve and Reserve retirees younger than sixty years of age. A new card, Defense Department form No. 2529, would become effective on January 1, 2001.

NOV. 18, 1998

THE FIRST meeting of the DeCA retiree council took place at DeCA headquarters.

NOV. 25, 1998

DeCA **BEGAN** honoring Reservists' shopping privileges, increased to twenty-four times per year (up from twelve). The privilege had been approved in the October authorization bill, but its effective date had been left unclear. (Source: Bill Ritz, interview with Dr. Peter D. Skirbunt, 26 Nov 1998)

DEC. 16, 1998

World Events: The United States and Great Britain began directly addressing a lingering problem by **bombing Baghdad** to show Iraqi President Saddam Hussein he could not block UN weapons inspection teams from doing their job.

DEC. 19, 1998

U.S. Political History: President Clinton was **impeached** by the House of Representatives. He was acquitted by the Senate, which did not consider him to have committed actions worthy of expulsion from office.

DEC. 20, 1998

World Events: The Pentagon announced that the attacks on Iraq would cease, as "the objectives have been attained."

1999

1999

Retail History: The Lucky Supermarket name disappeared in California after almost sixty-five years, as American stores was purchased by Albertson's.

JAN. 11-13, 1999

AT THE ALA Western Roundtable in San Diego, **Richard E. Beale Jr.** said he was stepping down as



1998: RAF ALCONBURY, England. This unusual, angled view of the commissary's sales floor was taken from a catwalk that runs along the store's interior ceiling. The catwalk is adjacent to a skylight and leads to a door providing access to the roof. DeCA photo: Tim Ford

FEB. 19, 1999

DeCA director as of October 1, 1999. In another announcement, DeCA said it would raise prices by 1 percent before October 1, to cover the cost of shrinkage, pilferage, and spoilage, since such losses were part of the goods' cost. Customers now would be paying the true "cost price."

U.S. Military History: President Clinton issued a presidential pardon to **Lt. Henry Ossian Flipper**, the first African-American to graduate from West Point. As an assistant commissary of subsistence at Fort Davis, Texas, in 1881, Flipper was convicted of conduct unbecoming an officer, and was dishonorably discharged from the Army. (For more details, see feature in chapter 4. Also, *U.S. News & World Report*, 1 Mar 1999, p. 12;

Lindor Reynolds and Lynn Radeka, *Forts & Battlefields of the Old West*, 1991, p. 137; and Theodore D. Harris (ed.), *Black Frontiersman: The Memoirs of Henry O. Flipper, First Black Graduate of West Point*, 1997)

FEB. 22, 1999

DoD authorized employees of the U.S. Marshal's Service and their families access to the commissaries and exchanges in Puerto Rico. (Denise Murden, Msg. to Bonnie Powell, cc to Dr. Peter D. Skirbunt, 23 Feb 1999)

MARCH 24, 1999

World Events: NATO launched air attacks against Serbs in Yugoslavia after the Serbs refused to end hostilities in Kosovo. The assault included air- and sea-launched cruise missiles and bombing runs by American, German, and French aircraft.

JUNE 11, 1999

World Events: Serbia signed an agreement to withdraw its troops from Kosovo and allow NATO peacekeepers into the area. Soon thereafter, KFOR (NATO's Kosovo Force) began deploying about fifty thousand ground troops from eighteen countries. About seven thousand of these troops were Americans.

JULY 1, 1999

THE 1-PERCENT fee to cover shrinkage, pilferage, and spoilage, announced in January, took effect.

AUGUST 1999

FOR THE FIRST time since 1972, a government report acknowledged the important link between commissaries and the retention and recruitment of military personnel. ("Military Personnel: Perspectives of Surveyed Service Members in Retention Critical Specialties," prepared for Congress by the General Accounting Office, Aug 1999)

AUG. 6, 1999

DeCA SIGNED a partnership charter with two unions representing government employees, AFGE (American Federation of Government Employees) and NFFE (National Federation of Government Employees).

SEPT. 8, 1999

GROUND BREAKING ceremonies were held for the new DeCA headquarters addition.

SEPT. 15, 1999

THE LAST of the U.S. commissaries in Panama, the store at Howard Air Force Base, closed. This action came three months and fifteen days before the United States was to turn over all property, including military bases and the Panama Canal itself, to the Republic of Panama in accordance

with the Carter-Torrijos Treaty of 1977.

OCT. 2, 1999

DeCA DIRECTOR Richard E. Beale Jr. retired from federal service. John McGowan, the executive director for operations, became acting director of DeCA.

OCT. 28, 1999

THE DEFENSE Commissary Operating Board approved the new visitor policy. People not eligible to shop in the commissary could enter the stores when accompanied by an eligible shopper. This policy would go into effect on November 1. The action was aimed at assisting aging or injured customers who needed a ride to the store, help while shopping, or both.

NOV. 1, 1999

AIR FORCE Maj. Gen. Robert J. Courter Jr. was named DeCA's new director. Courter was the former director of plans and programs at Headquarters Air Force Materiel Command, Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. On November 3, he visited DeCA headquarters to meet key personnel and receive briefings. On December 13, Courter arrived for his first day as the new director.

NOV. 4, 1999

THE LATEST market basket survey showed a CONUS customer savings of 27 percent. (DeCA news release 22-99, 4 Nov 1999)

DEC. 31, 1999

U.S. History: At 12 noon, all U.S. property in Panama, including military installations and the Panama Canal itself, were officially turned over to the Republic of Panama (see pp. 108-10, 360-61). In 1977, the Panama Canal Treaty was signed by Panamanian General Omar Torrijos Herrera and U.S. President Jimmy Carter. The treaty ceded the fifty-mile long canal and the surrounding Canal Zone to Panama. The canal had marked a pivotal point in America's emergence as a world power. The United States supported Panama's revolt against Colombia in 1903; completed the canal in 1914; and assumed control of the land surrounding it from the Caribbean to the Pacific. Two commissaries, one at Howard Air Force Base and the other at Corozal, had closed several months prior to this date.



Maj. Gen.
Robert J. Courter Jr.

1999: DOVER Air Force Base, Delaware. Air Force Capt. Greg Murray, a reservist, shops in the commissary. The previous year, reservists' shopping privileges at commissaries had doubled, from twelve to twenty-four times yearly; that was in addition to full-time privileges while on active duty. Within four years, reservists would be given full-time privileges in recognition of their importance to the nation's defense.

DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt



"It's a simple truth: retain the families and you retain the service member— and modern commissaries help to retain the families!"

— Vice Admiral J. D. McCarthy, acting chairman of the Commissary Operating Board

12

SOLIDIFYING 2000 - 2007 THE BENEFIT

AS THE YEAR 2000 approached, it seemed anywhere computers played a role in everyday life, there was at least some awareness of a possible "Millennium Bug" short-circuiting the world's computer systems. In theory, a worldwide shut-down or malfunction of computer systems could be triggered by their inability to handle the switch from 12/31/99 to 01/01/00.

Since almost everything DeCA did—ordering, receiving, making sales, making payments, inputting salary information—depended upon computers, agency employees were among the millions wondering exactly what would happen at the stroke of midnight when 1999 ended and 2000 began.

2003: AROUND THE CLOCK.

DeCA analysts work three shifts of the agency's headquarters help desk at Fort Lee, Virginia. Help desk personnel solve individual problems confronting computers on the desks of hundreds of headquarters, region, zone, and store personnel, while maintaining entire computer networks linked to customer transactions and store inventory. The help desk also serves as backup to the emergency operations center in the directorate of operations. It can place all phones and computers at DeCA headquarters on generator power in case of an emergency, maintaining computer networks linked to customer transactions in the stores and personal computers used by DeCA employees. Here, (from left) Kim Callahan, Robert Bryant, Kenneth Sanborn, and Velvet Redd answer distress calls during a peak period. *DeCA photo: Kevin L. Robinson*



The Department of Defense was especially concerned about any sort of potential shutdown, and had made special efforts to ensure its computers were “Y2K compliant.” DeCA’s computers were part of the DoD system, and thus received plenty of expert attention.

Largely because preventative measures were taken by businesses throughout the world—and possibly because the problem was not as big as was generally feared—no significant problems occurred anywhere. Fears of civilization’s imminent collapse into chaos dissipated as January 1, 2000, spread westward from Australia with almost no computer problems anywhere.

However, 2000 did mark a new beginning for the agency. In November 1999, for the first time in seven years, DeCA had welcomed a new director, the first Air Force officer to take the agency’s reins. He brought new ideas and a new approach, both of which challenged personnel to perform their missions in new ways.

A NEW DIRECTOR

When Dick Beale retired in October 1999, his position was filled on an interim basis by John F. McGowan, chief executive officer, until the arrival of the new director, Air Force Maj. Gen. Robert J. Courter Jr. (1999–2002), from the Air Force Materiel Command at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. Courter would make some tough decisions that were not always popular within the organization, but ultimately they improved DeCA’s financial situation and helped preserve the benefit. His business practices, including his atten-



2000: DEFENSE SUPPLY CENTER-RICHMOND, Virginia. The commissary benefit has been determined to be a strong incentive for service members and their families to stay in the military.

DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt



**Maj. Gen.
Robert J. Courter Jr.**

tion to the actual cost of running each commissary, enabled the agency to assure itself of a sound financial footing.

Courter used the phrase “storming, forming, norming, and performing” when referring to his place among the agency’s first directors: Dreska had “stormed” by putting the agency together; Dreska and Beale had both “formed” the agency to their liking; and Courter saw his mission as “norming” the agency, getting everything on track and “performing” properly, after making those tough business decisions.

Probably Courter’s most important action was to implement a revitalization of depleted surcharge funds. This was accomplished by realigning costs between funds appropriated for the commissary system and the funds generated by the surcharge. While this revitalization occurred, DeCA received funds from the services to see it through the transitional period.

BUSINESSLIKE APPROACH

In 1999, senior Department of Defense and agency leadership had developed what some called “a more business-oriented approach to running DeCA,” using commercial methods of cutting costs and producing more results with less expense. The focus on outputs and costs created a shift

away from customer service as the number one priority. Critics of this approach felt customer service was being placed unnecessarily on the back burner, and cautioned that government agencies could not be run entirely like businesses; DeCA differed from its civilian counterparts because it was not in business to make a profit, but solely to provide a benefit. Proponents of the new approach argued that if a more businesslike approach was not adopted, very possibly there would be no commissary benefit at all in the years to come. Both sides had their points, but at this time the businesslike approach won out.

With Courter's arrival, all aspects of DeCA operations were reviewed from store, region, and headquarters level. The agency reorganized into four business units (operations, product support, resources, and capital investment), and instituted performance and activity-based management practices to control operating costs.

The strategic planning process was the framework for reviewing all aspects of operations at all levels, and creating and encouraging desirable changes. The agency developed a personnel template for the



2001: SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT.

Maj. Gen. Robert J. Courter Jr. congratulates Renee Petrina, a sophomore at Penn State and the scholarship winner from Defense Supply Center-Richmond, Virginia. She was one of the first recipients of the Scholarships for Military Children. DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt

stores that could be modified to meet individual store needs.

Agency sales performance had taken on a more important role as the shopping needs of the active-duty force, particularly young enlisted service members and their families,

were considered in product mix, store layout, convenience items, and services. During Courter's tenure, DeCA recommended the services close more marginal stores than at any other period in its history. Marginal stores were those with high unit costs to operate, and were located in areas that could be served by other nearby commissaries.

NEW PROGRAMS AND INNOVATIONS

Several very visible programs began during Courter's years at DeCA.

Scholarships. One of the most popular programs ever associated with the commissaries was a partnership between DeCA and the food industry to "give back to the military community" in the form of annual scholarships awarded to hundreds of children of military parents. Initiated by Courter and known as the Scholarships for Military Children program, it was administered and funded by commis-

sary suppliers and the Fisher House Foundation. Many individuals and organizations also contributed to the program through direct donations, or through the Combined Federal Campaign.

The scholarships were valued at \$1,500 each. In 2001, the program's first year, more than five thousand applicants wrote essays for the competition, and scholarships were awarded to 391 individuals. The program grew in popularity, and scholarships were awarded to more than 500 students in each of the next six years. At least one \$1,500 scholarship was awarded at every commissary location with qualified applicants. The program was open to unmarried children under the age of 21 (23 if enrolled in school) of active-duty personnel, Reserve, National Guard, and retired military.

BVI. Courter initiated the concept of Best Value Item (BVI) because he believed commissary patrons should be guaranteed the best local price on several hundred national-brand items in any given week. Addressing mem-



2000: ATTENTION TO DETAIL.

Larry Mayfield of Navy Supply Corps School Athens, Georgia, touches up a wall inside the store. U.S. Navy photo: Ensign Thomas Granger

bers of industry as well as his own employees, Courter put it simply: "I don't see why we can't give our military patrons the best prices, period." He challenged industry to "make it work," and DeCA buyers to "pursue the best deals." Since the BVI items would vary from one week to the next, Courter cautioned the commissary officers that they would have to post BVI signs on the shelf each week, but only after verifying that their BVI prices matched, or were lower than, the lowest prices offered at local supermarkets. The results for the patrons, he felt, were worth the extra effort.

Attention to Detail. Another Courter

initiative was that of making the stores more attractive to customers by paying attention to details that commissaries often ignored, or considered low priority. Courter encouraged store directors to take interest in the small touches that would make their store more attractive and pleasant. The premise was that such efforts would encourage customers to shop more often, and, if all employees would show pride in their workplace by keeping it clean and well-maintained, they would make it more attractive and a better place to work. Turning drab, institutional-style restrooms into sparkling, homelike facilities would pay big dividends; thorough cleanings, placing vases

of flowers next to the sinks, and hanging framed prints on the walls would constitute a good start. Fresh paint would keep a store looking neat and trim.

Other initiatives included placing a mirror on the wall near the entrance, where customers could easily see it, with the slogan, "The Most Important Person in the Store" hanging next to the mirror. "Welcome" and "Thank You" signs prominently displayed near a store's entrance, exit, and in the parking lot would make customers feel appreciated.

"Grab 'N Go." To make the commissary a healthful alternative to fast-food restaurants, Courter encouraged stores to



SEPTEMBER 11, 2001. Firefighters battle the blaze at the Pentagon after terrorists hijacked an airliner and crashed it into the building, killing 184 military and civilian personnel on the ground and in the plane. Nearly three thousand people were killed during the September 11 attacks involving four hijacked commercial aircraft. Two of the airliners crashed into the World Trade Center's twin towers in New York City. DeCA's Pentagon office escaped unscathed. *Army photo: Spc. Tony R. Knouf, Military District of Washington public affairs*

establish “Grab ‘N Go” sections near the front of the store. There, customers in a hurry—particularly those in uniform and on their way back to work—could purchase ready-made sandwiches, snacks, fruit, and various soft drinks and juices. The Grab ‘N Go sections quickly became popular and successful.

Change in Title.

During Courter’s tenure as director, a change, initiated by former director Richard E. Beale Jr., saw fruition. The titles “commissary sales officer,” “commissary store officer,” and “commissary officer”^{*}—titles that had been used since 1867—

came to an unofficial end. The term “store director” was used instead. The traditional terms originated in the days when the people in charge of commissary warehouses and sales stores actually had been officers in uniform. By 2000, though, no officer in uniform—in fact, no one of any military rank—was still running any of the stores. Although this change in terminology was a break with 133 years of tradition, it more accurately reflected the civilianized nature of the position.^{**}

DECA SAFE FROM ‘MAD COW’

In March 2000, due to a growing uneasiness involving bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE)—commonly known as “Mad Cow” disease—European commissaries were instructed to stop any and all selling of British and European beef products. This was done in response to the Army surgeon general’s decision to enforce a U.S. Department of Agriculture regulation. At that point, European commissaries were stocking only U.S. beef, except for some local delicatessen products. However, if the BSE problem ever spread to cattle in the United States, every commissary, on-



2001: HELPING HANDS. At the Bangor, Washington, commissary—now known as the commissary at Naval Station Kitsap, Bangor—military spouses raised funds in support of the victims of the September 11 terrorist attacks. Part of the event involved making this massive banner covered with messages of support. Photo courtesy Naval Station Kitsap, Bangor commissary

base restaurant, delicatessen, shopette, and fast-food establishment could possibly be impacted. The USDA regulation influenced every on-post retailer that sold beef.

Ten months later, BSE was being found in mainland Europe, and U.S. cattlemen were worried. Twelve hundred cattle had already been quarantined in Texas because they were thought to have been given some feed that contained portions of cattle brains and spinal cords, a primary factor suspected of being responsible for spreading the disease. The quarantined cattle in Texas ultimately were declared safe, but over the next few years, vigilant inspectors found several diseased cows that had originated in other countries and had been mixed into U.S. herds. The success of the inspections had thus far enabled cattlemen to keep diseased cattle out of the food supply.

SEPTEMBER 11 TERRORIST ATTACKS

All American citizens know the story well: On September 11, 2001, Islamic extremists hijacked four commercial airliners. They flew two planes into the twin towers of New York City’s World Trade Center, which

later collapsed. Another plane was flown into the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. The fourth, apparently en route to a target in Washington, crashed in the Pennsylvania countryside when its passengers attempted to gain control of the aircraft. The attacks claimed the lives of nearly three thousand people, marking a new “day of infamy” more catastrophic and unnerving than anything seen on American soil since Pearl Harbor in 1941.

The DeCA liaison office, previously located close to the impact area at the Pentagon, escaped unscathed, and its occu-

pants were uninjured, because the office had been moved from its former location. Tragically, DeCA lost two good friends in the Pentagon attack: Retired Army Lt. Col. Gary Smith, chief of the Army’s retirement services office and a member of DeCA’s patron council, perished, along with his deputy, Max Beilke, while attending a meeting in the section of the Pentagon hit by the attack.

As to the commissaries, whether or not they remained open the next week was decided at the local level. Each situation, particularly regarding security considerations, was unique and could not be controlled by DeCA headquarters. Military installations buttoned up their security measures, creating long lines of cars as each vehicle was inspected at the gate. That made it difficult for families living on base to easily leave and return, encouraging them to do all their food shopping at the commissary. The security measures also made it difficult for employees, deliveries, and off-post patrons to reach the stores, but, given the severity of what had happened, few people complained. Delays getting on post were, for a time, standard procedure.

^{*} — For years, these were abbreviated “CSO,” even among those who used the simplified and civilianized “commissary officer” designation.

^{**} — In human resources terminology, the position is still officially called “commissary officer.”

A few days after the attacks, Courter speculated on the significance of the events to DeCA employees. Predicting there would be a permanent behavioral change in the country, he correctly surmised the National Guard and Reserves would be activated, adding more patrons who would be eligible for the commissary benefit. In any event, he made it clear that DeCA would do whatever was necessary to support its patrons, wherever they were.

A primary concern of the region directors and store directors was that of maintaining security for those commissaries located “outside the gate” of their installations, which were possibly vulnerable to other terrorist activities. Then there was the task of keeping all stores operational, and maintaining stock levels. More inventory was needed everywhere, and there was a heavy demand on all food items, especially canned goods, since many wanted to fill their cupboards in preparation for unforeseen emergencies. Troops would be needed to help stock the stores if civilian employees continued to experience difficulties getting to work. Somehow, DeCA had to find ways to ensure that employees and deliveries could get to the stores, despite necessary inspections and the resultant bottlenecks at the installations’ gates.

THE STATE OF DECA, 2001

A snapshot of DeCA at the end of fiscal year 2001—three weeks after the events of 9/11—showed 281 active stores, with total sales of \$5 billion. DeCA defined its mission as delivering the premier quality-of-life benefit to service members and their families efficiently and effectively. The agency supported troops and embassy staff in thirty-two locations, providing American products through direct shipment to multiple remote locations. It provided operational support to other key facilities, including the Guantanamo Bay NEXMART in Cuba. More than one-third of military commissaries were overseas in locations no American commercial grocer could operate.

Operating costs were covered by appropriated funds, and DeCA’s operational costs compared very favorably with those of civilian commercial outlets. The sales

capacity of any DeCA store was 18 percent greater than those of typical supermarkets. Average savings of 30 percent when compared to retail grocers’ prices would translate to approximately \$2 billion saved yearly by service members’ families, a significant return on investment (ROI) going directly to the customers. USDA figures for grocery expenditures showed that a family of four could save about \$2,400 annually if they consistently shopped at the commissary.

COMMISSARIES IN THE AFTERMATH OF 9/11

America’s response to the terrorist attacks began with Operation Noble Eagle to defend the nation’s domestic shores, continued with Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan less than a month later, and inspired the creation of the Department of Homeland Security. Operation Iraqi Freedom began in March 2003.

DeCA leadership understood there would be increased pressures on the defense budget as anti-terror operations continued, and the agency would have to become increasingly efficient. There would be fewer dollars available for non-combatant commands, while the “war on terror” would consume hundreds of billions of dollars. The money would have to come from somewhere, and each command and agency would have to give up some funding as a result. DeCA would need forward-thinking leadership to keep commissaries in a viable supporting role.

ADAPTING TO THE TERRORIST CHALLENGE

Because of the terrorist threat and the global nature of the war on terrorism, commissary facilities today take extra precautions to help assure a safe and secure shopping environment. The agency does its part by understanding potential threats and taking proactive steps to meet those threats. All commissaries come under the Department of Defense’s various force protection-related programs. They acquire food products only from the DoD Worldwide Directory of Approved Sources, and implement the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s Food Security Pre-

ventative Measures Guidance.

Members of DeCA’s security staff periodically assess every commissary to maintain a safe and secure shopping environment. The safety of the customers in the store and of the food products they purchase are DeCA’s primary concerns. Each store follows Force Protection Condition (FPCON) measures, as do all military installations and units. These measures are fine-tuned for local, store-level implementation, to include such things as identification checks. Off-installation facilities use additional measures to reduce risks.

Since DeCA no longer had a troop support function, its primary wartime mission had become one of supporting military families. Still, with the start of the war on terror, DeCA found new ways to directly assist deployed personnel and their families. Creation of the “Gift of Groceries” program in 2003, for example, enabled anyone to purchase gift certificates for eligible commissary shoppers. In addition, “Operation Touch of Home,” supported by central distribution centers in DeCA’s European Region, provided support to American forces in Kuwait, Iraq, Afghanistan, and the entire Middle East by supplying foodstuffs to the Army and Air Force Exchange Service, which had tactical field exchanges in the theater of operations.

DeCA also supplied a variety of items ranging from snacks for humans to dog food for military working dogs (and probably for a few units’ canine mascots, as well). Most of the items included convenience products such as potato chips, cookies, candy, and juice. Central distribution centers and the central meat-processing plant (CMPP) in Germany provided brand name product support to AAFES in Kuwait’s Camp Arifjan, and to the Navy ship’s store in Bahrain.

In the Mediterranean, the agency had already been supporting the U. S. fleet out of the bases at Rota, Sigonella, and Naples. Although ships arrived with little or no notice, the agency had nonetheless been able to provide support with bulk items. When the Defense Logistics Agency and the Defense Supply Center in Philadelphia requested DeCA’s support for hospital

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First Man to Break
the Sound Barrier

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PROMOTING the BENEFIT

THROUGH THE YEARS, DeCA has used a series of posters of celebrity customers to help attract more shoppers. TOP: Retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Chuck Yeager appeared on the 2003 poster. Yeager, famous for breaking the sound barrier as a test pilot in 1947, shops at a number of commissaries in northern California. FAR RIGHT: In 2002, Cheryl Stearns, an Army Reserve sergeant first class and member of the Golden Knights parachute team, was posterized. She was the first woman to join the Knights and owns 30 world skydiving records. She was also a 737 pilot. LOWER RIGHT: Also in 2002, Army specialists Kara Salmela and Mike Kohn were members of the military's World Class Athlete Program, and were on the U.S. Olympic team during the 2002 Winter games. RIGHT: In 2001, Rudy Boesch lent his celebrity as a *Survivor* TV show star to help the agency attract more shoppers. Bonnie Powell, marketing strategy manager for the headquarters marketing business unit, arranged the former SEAL's participation through DeCA employee Laurie Magary, a friend of the Boesch family. It also didn't hurt that Boesch's daughter, Barbara, was a former agency employee.



DeCA photos: Bonnie Powell. Computer

graphics: Anne Terrell Fenessy, corporate communications

Cash Registers & Sales Store Checkers

THE CASH REGISTER is proof of the validity of the old saying, "Necessity is the mother of invention."

There was a real need for someone to invent a cash register in the 1870s, a decade remembered for corruption at all levels of government and society. Businesses suffered considerable financial losses from employee theft as low-wage retail employees, seeing the wealth amassed by "robber baron" tycoons, felt justified in slipping money out of the till. The cash register was invented in response to inadequate accounting and tracking methods that allowed dishonest workers to pilfer money from their employers.

The first cash register was invented in 1879 by James Ritty, a saloonkeeper in Dayton, Ohio. Ritty called his invention an "incorruptible cashier" because it would reveal whether salespeople were skimming money from the register. His design looked nothing like cash registers that emerged in the twentieth century; it had been inspired by a machine that counted the revolutions of an ocean liner's propeller. Ships' instruments use round dials and gauges, so Ritty's machine resembled a clock—but it also set precedents by using metal keys, or taps, with embossed

denominations. When the sale was totaled a bell rang, alerting managers a sale was being made, so they could go supervise the transaction if they wished. The machine also totaled the sums of all the sales during the course of a day.

There were many cash register companies that used various designs in the 1880s, but few survived. Because of its quality, marketing, constant refinements, and attention to detail, Ritty's was the most successful. Yet he sold his invention and his National Cash Register (NCR) Company for \$1,000 in 1882. In 1886 the new owner ran an advertisement that again described the machine as an incorruptible cashier, saying, "It records mechanically every sale made in a store. It never tires. It never does one thing while thinking of another, and never makes a mistake. It is a mathematical prodigy in brass and steel, all of whose computations are invariably correct. It is a machine that will save you money and thus pay for itself over and over again."

Many innovations followed. The Total Adder calculated the total of



1997: CAMP PENDLETON, California. Ethel Blackman, a cashier at Camp Pendleton, sports a special DeCA-Camp Pendleton "Going for the Best" T-shirt in Marine Corps colors, which was part of the store's campaign for the "Best Commissary" award in 1997-98.

DeCA photo: Carole Ann Fowler

the day's receipts. Some machines incorporated accounting and executive information features. By 1902, a business owner could get an audit trail of transactions, a customer count, detailed amounts rung, and cumulative totals. Soon he could get all that information for each of several sales clerks, and could even identify individual product transactions. All of this information permitted a business to run special sales promotions, establish clerk-incentive schemes, collect quantitative market research data, and extend credit to selected customers.

While most registers were hand-cranked, electrical models became available by 1906. NCR's John Kettering (who later created the automotive engine starter) designed the first register to be driven by an electric motor. Early registers boasted elaborate cases, making them collectors' items today. The typical register case was cast brass, although some used iron or wood. After World War I, as the machines became more common, they lost their aura of fascination. Soon they were no longer made to be beautiful, but were merely functional. By the late 1930s, all

models aided bookkeeping and inventory control; the “stores control machines” of 1937-38 at West Point and Carlisle Barracks were examples of these.

Electrical cash registers became the norm after World War II, but fast fingers and eyes, as well as an ability to mentally add, subtract, make change, and figure percentages were still requirements of the job.

Registers that automatically made change were first introduced in the 1950s. By the mid-1970s, scanners that read a Universal Product Code (UPC) bar code on each sales item, calculated the price, gave detailed receipts, and kept inventory began to

appear. Electronic scales were used for weighing fruits and vegetables, which were among the few items that still had to be keyed into the register. The first commissary known to have used scanners was the Navy store at Moffett Field, California, in 1974, followed by Dahlgren Surface Warfare Center in Virginia. The scanners were a success, and soon all the services used them in their biggest stores. Within a decade, scanners were commonplace at all but the smallest commissaries.

The latest innovation—actually, it was first tried unsuccessfully in the late 1980s—is the self-checkout, allowing customers to ring up and pay for their own groceries. When perfected, the process may allow commissaries to save money by cutting the number of cashiers. The day may come when customers will simply place their goods on a checkout conveyor, and they will be automatically scanned. Or, perhaps carts that scan items as the shoppers place groceries in the basket may do all the work, and front end conveyors will become obsolete. But no matter how far the technology takes the process, it will still require some degree of human supervision. That person has always been a clerk or cashier. Currently, these people play a doubly important role:



1960: HANCOCK FIELD, New York. A cashier in uniform assists a patron at checkout. Registers with conveyor belts, such as this one, are taken for granted today, but they were enough of a novelty in 1960 that they were designated “moving belt registers.” *Military Market, Army Times Publications*

They are the employees with whom every customer comes in contact, and their professionalism, competence, and friendly attitude go a long way toward determining whether or not customers will consider their shopping experience a pleasant one. That, in turn, may determine how often they return.

Early on, in the all-male environment of military posts, commissary sales checkers were nearly all men. There were undoubtedly exceptions, but, as far as can presently be determined, the first female commissary cashiers were those in the main commissary in Paris, France, in 1918-1919. After World War I, female checkers became more commonplace. During World War II, women filled an increasing number of commissary cashier positions.

Although young men—sometimes young servicemen, and sometimes the sons of servicemen—continued to turn up as checkers, at most stores women began dominating the positions by the mid-1960s. The women might be local civilians, or the spouses or daughters of people in uniform. Today, about 90 percent of commissary cashiers are female, and many of them are members of military families, working part time. This helps store management create flexible work schedules to cover busy periods, while maintaining a smaller crew on days when there is less business.

For awhile, stores tracked their cashiers and actually declared one person or another to be “the fastest cashier” in TSA, AFCOMS, or NAVRESSO. Unfortunately, the quest to make the checkout process speedier and more accurate opened a Pandora’s Box of difficulties. The repetitive motion used by a cashier to scan thousands of items per day led to carpal tunnel syndrome and other arm, neck, and back-related problems. Since cashiers were on their feet most of the day, they often experienced fatigue and leg stress. Even the noise the registers made, sometimes at such high frequency as to be inaudible, could lead to severe headaches among some individuals. These concerns have led to studies and new systems that are ergonomically designed for cashiers’ comfort and physical well-being.

Whether the customers check themselves through, or the job is performed by an employee, the understanding of human physiology will need to keep pace with new cashiering devices, making them ergonomically friendly to their users.



2004: LANGLEY Air Force Base, Virginia. A customer tries out the self-checkout. As patrons became familiar with the technology, they began using self-checkouts more frequently. *DeCA photo*

ships at the beginning of the Iraqi conflict, the mechanisms for supply were already in place.

PRIVATIZATION CONCERNS

The terrorist attacks had a direct effect on efforts to privatize the commissaries. Starting in January 2001, proposals for contracting out commissary operations were justified as a way to save costs. In July, the House Armed Services Committee's Special Oversight Panel on Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (HASC/MWR) announced it was opposed to a pilot program to contract out certain commissaries. Representative Roscoe Bartlett (R-Maryland), the panel chairman, said, "I'm all for trying out new ideas, but we need a period, particularly with so many other parts of DoD under a microscope, to chart a steady course and protect a proven and treasured benefit."

Just two months later, because of the new demands placed upon the military by the events of September 11, any drastic changes in military benefits became unrealistic. The possible ramifications of privatization on security would have posed problems. Adding thousands of non-DoD civilians to on-base contract operations at a time when security had become a major concern was simply impractical.

Meanwhile, Courter appeared before Bartlett's panel and testified that the commissary benefit was stronger than ever, customer savings were at an all-time high, and family readiness "is what it's all about." He attributed the strength of the benefit to DeCA's ability to operate, as much as possible, like a business: "We are providing greater savings for service members and their families on the goods and services they buy than at any other time in history. We're also operating the agency more efficiently and effectively than ever before."

Courter believed DeCA had reached a point where its methods had produced a reasonable unit cost. He also defined and clarified the role commissaries now played in the lives of military members and their families: "They [the commissaries] are



about family readiness ... in that they enable families to locate and live around the world with military members; they are about consistent delivery (to these families) of U.S. grocery products and low prices worldwide; and they are about extending the purchasing power of military families by providing substantial savings on grocery prices over the commercial sector." Courter believed the stores provided an important sense of community at military installations, providing a built-in support group that was especially important when military members deployed to combat areas and left their families behind.

Not everyone on the panel was receptive. Courter later said he felt that he had been "dragged over the coals" regarding DeCA's downsizing plans. A congressional delegate from Guam, who was familiar with the bases and commissaries on the island, praised the way the surcharge fund had stabilized and store infrastructure had improved, but questioned the logic in cutting personnel to save money, while claiming there would be no loss of customer service. He was not convinced it could be done.

Others were concerned about fatigued smaller staffs performing the same work-

load. It also became apparent that retirees were unhappy about commissary closures and perceived them as examples of a lack of respect for their service and the continuing erosion of their benefits.

DEFINING DECA'S EMERGING MISSION

When Courter retired during the summer of 2002, the agency was in sound financial shape. Chief Executive Officer Patrick B. Nixon added acting director to his responsibilities, and it fell to him to present a justification to the DoD's Senior Executive Council (SEC)* for DeCA's continued existence as a Defense agency. This event was a turning point in commissary history.

DeCA had been identified as a defense business agency funded by DoD, and the SEC required it to present its core competencies for review. The objective of this review was to determine whether or not the DeCA mission was core to DoD's mission, or whether the DeCA mission could be readily accomplished by the private sector.

In July, Nixon briefed the SEC on DeCA's core competencies that supported the department's war-fighting mission. This presentation determined the future exist-

* — Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld was the council chairman, and its members included each service's secretary.

tence of the agency. Nixon's position paper, "Transformation of the Defense Commissary Agency," set commissary standards for the future: The agency's core competencies included delivering the top non-pay benefit to support both the military communities and the deployment of military forces worldwide. Customer savings were the core of the commissary benefit and the primary reason for its existence. Although commissary facilities might have superb technology and customer service, the commissary benefit was ultimately defined by significant savings delivered to the patron.

DeCA's position was that both the level of savings provided to the military community, and the fact the agency delivered those savings to remote locations and overseas

environments, made the benefit indispensable. By its very existence, DeCA enhanced readiness and improved retention, and was vital to the all-volunteer force. Commissaries enabled families to live with military members worldwide, simultaneously boosting morale and assuring host nations that the U.S. military presence was intended to be peaceful. By delivering U.S. grocery products at consistently low prices to service members and their families worldwide, DeCA enabled combat personnel to focus on their mission, knowing their family members had a safe, secure environment in which they could acquire life's basic necessities. In fact, the commissary had become a social and economic hub in many military communities worldwide.

Food familiarity and safety were also

keys to success. Commissary customers were able to shop with confidence, knowing the food on commissary shelves was safe. The agency cooperated fully with established federal strategies to maintain public health preventive, and integrated surveillance, inspection, enforcement, and education to ensure the products and services offered by DeCA met the strictest guidelines. Because so many of DeCA's commissaries were located where American retailers would not or could not go, the significance of food safety and security became paramount in distinguishing the difference between providing a benefit and simply selling groceries.

The commissaries provided a strong incentive to stay with the military. Nixon pointed out that studies consistently



2002: FOCUS GROUP. Store director Ho K. Lee (standing) helps sailors navigate through a focus group at the Naval Station Bremerton, Washington (now known as Naval Station Kitsap-Bremerton). A focus group is a customer outreach strategy to solicit shoppers' opinions on store activities and operations. DeCA photo: Frank Patrizi.

showed that they were a top-ranked benefit, and a strong benefits package is one of the most compelling reasons to pursue a military career, particularly in light of perceptions of a pay gap with the private sector. Because grocery savings were a strong incentive for retention, any hint of benefit degradation to retirees and to active-duty service members had typically met with strong resistance.

Significant progress had been made in reducing both unit costs and total costs of operations. DeCA continued to examine other areas of opportunity, including personnel management and administration, pricing procedure changes, operational improvements, and product acquisition. The agency explored competitive and alternative outsourcing, benchmarked best practices, partnered with industry and DoD agencies where appropriate, shaped its workforce, streamlined its organizational structure, and studied ways to generate more savings.

Following his presentation to the SEC, Nixon was encouraged by positive feedback he received from council members. Several extolled the value of the benefit. One remarked, "If the troops like it, which they do, and expect it, which they do, and we promised it to them, why would we take on this political football?" Council members also commented that the private sector couldn't do a better job than DeCA was already doing. As a result of the presentation, the council designated DeCA as supporting the war-fighting mission.* This was a very important vote of confidence for the benefit.

THE FOURTH DIRECTOR

In the Autumn of 2002, Air Force Maj. Gen. Michael P. Wiedemer (2002-2004) arrived at DeCA from his position as director of requirements at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio.

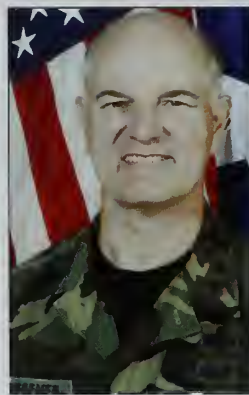
Since his predecessor had strengthened DeCA's financial standing, Wiedemer was able to devote his attention to the agency's

customers and personnel. The standards the agency set while under his direction reflected his genuine concern for the welfare of the commissary personnel who were delivering the benefit.

Wiedemer focused on reorganizing the agency to assure its future viability. He treated his employees like family and fostered an increased emphasis on safety. Genuine concern for the well-being of those under his direction inspired him to make available to DeCA employees the assistance of the federal government's Employee Assistance Program (EAP), which could be contacted any time of day or night by an employee seeking help with personal or job-related problems. He also helped define new core values for the agency.

L.I.F.E. AND 'RAVING FANS'

"LIFE," Wiedemer's own acronym for Leadership, Integrity, Flexibility, and Enjoyment, reflected his personal beliefs as to what was needed on the job, and became the agency's philosophy. His goal was to turn DeCA customers into "Raving Fans," a concept inspired by a book of the same name.** The "Raving Fans" approach to customer service aimed to create loyal customers. It encouraged employees to assure every customer felt special by giving them enthusiastic, personalized service and attention. "We have to determine customer requirements and needs. Then we have to deliver those wants and needs, plus one. I would like to see any customer who walks into a store be addressed by their title and name, and be asked for their feedback later. Essentially it comes down to, 'Is there anything we can do to



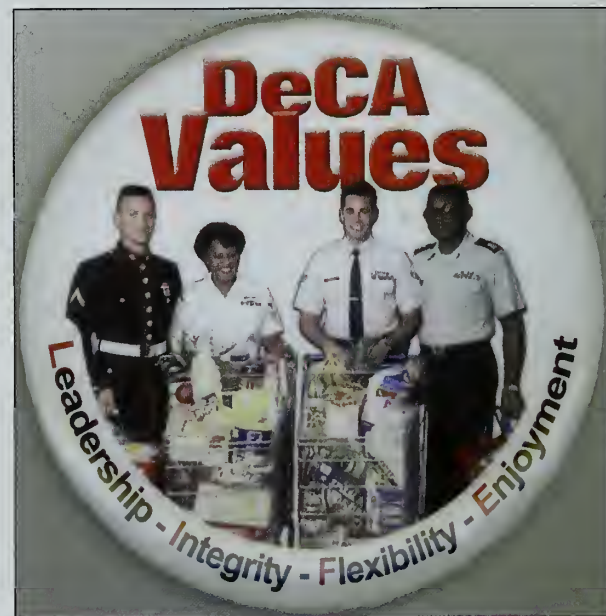
**Maj. Gen.
Michael P. Wiedemer**

make the commissary experience better for you?'"

That approach would, the general believed, keep customers coming back, and they would spread the news about the commissaries' outstanding goods, services, and prices. Wiedemer's method, combined with programs and improvements made under the previous directors, brought the agency to the highest levels of customer satisfaction, employ-

ee morale, and performance it had ever achieved. The solid foundation provided in its early years, its employees' dedication, and the savvy of its leadership were all instrumental in enabling the agency to continue its strong performance after Wiedemer retired in 2004.

The one change Wiedemer believed was needed at DeCA was to refocus on the stores. "Of the more than seventeen thousand employees in this organization, six-



2002: L.I.F.E. During Air Force Maj. Gen. Mike Wiedemer's tenure as agency director, he set standards that reflected his genuine concern for the welfare of the commissary personnel who were delivering the benefit. "L.I.F.E.," his acronym for Leadership, Integrity, Flexibility, and Enjoyment, reflected his beliefs as to what was needed on the job, and became the agency's philosophy.

DeCA historical file

* — *This was as of July 31, 2002.*

** — *The book is Raving Fans: A Revolutionary Approach to Customer Service by Ken Blanchard and Sheldon Bowles (copyright William, Morrow & Company, 1993).*

teen thousand are in the stores. The customers go to the stores. The reason for our existence is the stores. Where do we make most of our investments? The stores. Even if we invest in our IT systems in the headquarters building, it's to support the stores."

Wiedemer considered the strategic plan a living document which DeCA would use in its day-to-day business. The future of DeCA as an agency, and of the commissary benefit generally, depended largely upon the strategic plan. Wiedemer felt he had a "tremendous cadre of professionals," with a history of exceptional accomplishments, working for him.

Wiedemer believed, "An agency needs people who think about the agency as a whole and not about their own little corner of it." This necessitated a business philosophy that differed from the autonomous regions DeCA developed in 1991.

FULL-TIME SHOPPING FOR GUARD AND RESERVE FORCES

While Wiedemer was at DeCA's helm, several of the most significant events in commissary history occurred due to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Largely because of their increasingly important role in ongoing combat operations in the Middle East, members of the National Guard and Reserves were authorized full-time shopping privileges by the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2004 (effective October 1, 2003). Wiedemer's personalized, customer-friendly approach was a perfect way to welcome these new full-time shoppers.

The change to Guard and Reserve full-time shopping status had been in the works for many years. Traditionally, members of the reserve components had enjoyed limited commissary access and had unlimited shopping privileges only when they were on active duty. In peacetime, active duty amounted to two weeks out of every year. After the all-volunteer force necessitated increased involvement by the National Guard and Reserve, consideration was given to expanding the privilege. In November 1986, they had received authorization for twelve shopping trips per year in



WAR IN IRAQ.

ABOVE: Soldiers from Fort Hood, Texas, shown here in 2004, stand guard in Iraq. U.S. Army photo RIGHT: In this photo, fresh produce and flour are hoisted aboard the USNS *Big Horn* at Naval Station Rota, Spain. Although DeCA no longer had its troop support mission, it provided assistance to American forces in Kuwait, Iraq, Afghanistan, and the entire Middle East by supplying foodstuffs to the Army and Air Force Exchange Service, which did have tactical field exchanges.

DeCA photo courtesy Rota commissary



addition to unlimited privileges during their two weeks of active duty. A dozen years later, the National Defense Authorization Act of October 1998 increased the commissary privilege entitlement to twenty-four shopping days per year for selected Guard, Reserves, and Reserve retirees under sixty years of age. That act set the stage for full-time privileges in 2003.

With the stakes raised for delivering the benefit, Wiedemer acknowledged the hard work and excellence of agency employees. He noted that the agency had attained the best customer ratings in DeCA history in May of 2003, then bettered that mark the following November with a score of 4.47 out of 5. The agency was sustaining cus-

tomers savings at more than 30 percent.

Wiedemer, who believed in spreading credit for good news, told his employees they fulfilled "a noble mission" by providing food and basic household necessities to military members, retirees, and their families. "I have had the honor of visiting injured heroes returning from Afghanistan and Iraq at Landstuhl Hospital in Germany, and at Walter Reed Hospital in the United States. They told me ... they took comfort in knowing that their loved ones had a commissary to provide their families' basic needs ... We have the best and most powerful military in the history of the planet in part because we have helped attract, retain, and motivate volun-

DeCA ECHOES the DIVERSITY of the Military it Serves

THE LOOK OF THE commissaries is changing, and it's not just the look of the stores themselves. It's also the faces of commissary customers, employees, and managers.

In the nineteenth century, women did not work in the commissaries at all, and the only women shopping were those whose husbands were off to war. Minorities in uniform were allowed to work in the early commissary warehouses—the most famous of them being Henry O. Flipper [see pp. 78-79]—but the “Buffalo Soldiers” were scheduled to shop only at times when no white troops would be present. In some overseas stores, such as in Panama, strict segregation continued for many years after the practice was discontinued in the United States.

Yet nowhere have social strides been greater than in the armed forces. It is of great credit to the armed forces that commissaries were among the first places to be desegregated, long before segregation became illegal. During World War I, minorities were shopping in commissaries alongside whites. By the 1930s, women were becoming commissary employees with greater frequency. After the desegregation of the armed forces in 1947, women and minorities began turning up more often both as employees and shoppers.

When DeCA was formed in 1991, the agency soon began an annual equal employment opportunity (EEO) awards program to recognize individual and collective strides in diversity and human understanding within the agency. DeCA embraced EEO policy, a fact that quickly made it a model organization for cultural diversity and opportunity. Progress continues to this day and is reflective of transitions in demographics and in American attitudes.

Typifying the continuing trend in the early twenty-first century were numerous people who had worked their way up the commissary ladder and were rewarded with positions of respect and responsibility. Among the most prominent of these were Bonnie Kanitz, Herb Winchester, and Salah Ud-Din—a woman, an African-American, and a Pakistani-American. It is a positive measure of society's progress that such promotions no longer cause raised eyebrows. Perhaps that's because everyone familiar with them knows they were given no special treatment; they had to work hard to climb up the ladder, just like everyone else.

Bonnie Kanitz began her commissary career in 1975 and served as commissary officer at seven stores. Her efforts to integrate handicapped employees into the workplace at Vandenberg Air Force Base earned her the Strategic Air Command's Equal Employment Opportunity Selective Placement Award. When in 1985 her store at Peterson Air Force Base won AFCOMS' Best Large and Best Overall store awards, she was named the Air Force Senior Civilian Service's worldwide Manager of the Year. She later worked at AFCOMS' United Kingdom Complex, was a DeCA zone manager in North Carolina, and was deputy director of DeCA's Eastern Region. Kanitz believed, “Employees need to stay flexible.... Individuals have greater promotion potential when they have successfully handled a variety of jobs.



BONNIE KANITZ, then director of DeCA-Europe, answers one of the many questions from customers calling into the live radio show at American Forces Network (AFN) Frankfurt in 2004. DeCA photo: Gerri Young

Sometimes, a lateral assignment to a staffing position or to a store overseas provides valuable experience.”

Appointed to the Senior Executive Service (SES) in February 2002, she became director of DeCA's Midwest Region, an appointment that marked two historic firsts for the agency: She was the first woman in a commissary agency to attain SES status, and to become a region director. When Kanitz later moved to the directorship of DeCA-Europe, she oversaw sixty stores in ten countries on three continents.

She became director of DeCA's Eastern Region in January 2004, with responsibility for a hundred stores in twenty-eight states.

Of her role as one of DeCA's first female leaders, she confides, “I'm honored and excited to be the first woman SES in DeCA, but I'd rather be known for my achievements and qualifications. I encourage everyone to pursue their dreams, because dreams do come true.”

Herb Winchester, a longtime commissary employee of African-American descent, has been involved with commissary operations as a soldier and now as a government civilian. He was one of the few DeCA employees who were in military uniform when the agency formed in 1991. Before the services consolidated their commissary operations into one DoD agency, Winchester was a store manager and an Army sergeant first class at the Robinson Barracks commissary in Stuttgart, Germany, for the Troop Support Agency.

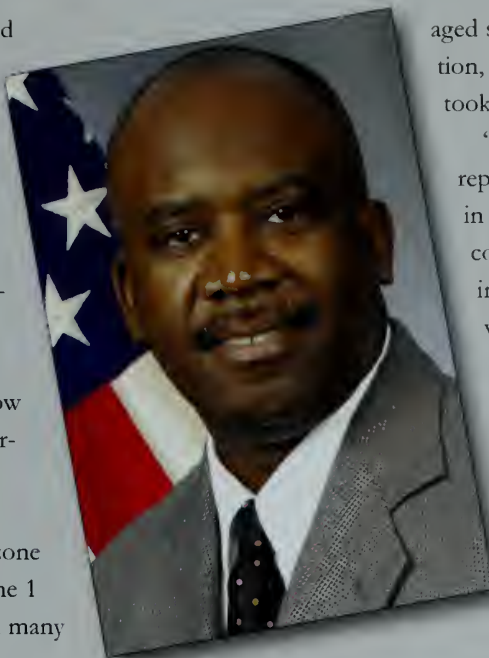
The Greensboro, North Carolina, native is a graduate of Virginia State University in Petersburg, Virginia, a graduate of the advanced commissary officer course, and a member of the Commissary Successor Development Program.

By 1994, Winchester had been promoted to master sergeant and assigned to be a deputy commissary officer at the Mannheim, Germany, store. Three years later, he retired from the Army and entered civil service with DeCA as a deputy commissary officer at the Heidelberg,

Germany, commissary. By May 2001, he had emerged from a series of commissary officer tours at several stores to oversee thirteen stores as a zone manager at Ramstein Air Base. As his career progressed, Winchester felt obligated to collect every possible tool he could find to reinforce his leadership skills: "Certain people have an instinct for leadership, but all leaders should ensure that they continue seeking information. No matter what your position is you are learning all the time, and that's how you grow as a leader and as a person. You never know when your skills will be put to the test—so it's important to keep them sharp."

After a stint as chief of product support for the European region, Winchester found himself in the zone manager's chair again—this time for Delta Gulf Zone 1 in DeCA East. On August 29, 2005, Winchester and many of his employees in that zone would be tested like never before.

In a natural disaster thought to be among the worst in American history, Hurricane Katrina came ashore as a major category 4 storm, packing winds of 168 miles per hour, and disrupting commissary operations at Naval Construction Battalion Center Gulfport and Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi, and at Naval Support Activity New Orleans. Anybody can lead when the sun is shining, but standing amid the carnage of dam-



HERB WINCHESTER was manager of DeCA East's Zone 1 when Hurricane Katrina struck in the Gulf Coast, damaging several stores in that region. DeCA photo: Rick Brink

aged stores, demolished homes and overall devastation, Winchester did what he always done best: he took charge.

"We're not going anywhere," he said in his reports to higher headquarters. "Those of us here in Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana plan to come back with a bang. We will do this by sticking together and looking out for one another with a can-do DeCA spirit." This was an amazing statement considering Winchester's own home and almost all of his family's belongings were destroyed during the hurricane.

Within days of the disaster, reinforced by a team of volunteers from throughout the agency, DeCA stood up temporary stores at Gulfport and Keesler. "Herb Winchester put his own losses aside and concentrated on the needs of our employees and patrons," said then-DeCA CEO and Acting Director Patrick Nixon. "He survived what none of us can imagine going through, and he did us proud."

That demonstration of exceptional leadership led to his being named the 2005 recipient of the Michael Blackwell Leadership Award. In the spring of 2007, Winchester was selected deputy director of DeCA Europe.

Salah Ud-Din was born in Pakistan, one of an increasing number of commissary employees from the Middle East. He attended the University of the Punjab, the oldest university in Pakistan, and received his degree in history, which gave him a broadened perspective and an appreciation for other cultures.

While working for U.S. forces in Pakistan as a local national, he met his future wife, a member of the American military. From 1980 to 1982, as a dependent hire, he was the grocery manager at the Troop Support Agency's Bremerhaven commissary. In 1985, he became the deputy commissary officer at Erlangen. Subsequently, he served as commissary officer or deputy at four stores in the U.S. and three in Germany. He became zone manager for the Mediterranean in 1998, zone manager in the Eastern Region in 2001, and went back to the Mediterranean in August 2002.

Ud-Din's responsibilities include the operational oversight of thirteen widely separated commissaries in Turkey, Egypt, Italy, Saudi Arabia, and Spain. He wouldn't have it any other way, though. "I like dealing with people," he says, and it's an attribute that has always served him well.

Popular with employees and blessed with good managerial skills, his grasp of leadership transcends training; like Kanitz and Winchester, he knows what it takes to be a good leader. Ud-Din believes "communicating with your people is the most important aspect of leadership.... Only poor leaders keep their people in the dark." He once wrote, "Your people are your biggest asset. They will carry you through the fire, but only if they are informed, empowered, and happy with their job and with your leadership." Not surprisingly, he won DeCA's 1999 Michael W. Blackwell Leadership Award.

For many leaders like these, the road has been full of learning, excitement, and opportunities—opportunities that would not have been available to them a few years ago.



SALAH UD-DIN accepts the Blackwell Leadership Award from DeCA Director Maj. Gen. Robert C. Courter Jr. during DeCA 2000. DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt

teers to defend freedom and democracy.” Wiedemer clearly understood the agency’s important role in the nation’s defense.

Wiedemer once noted that 55 percent of the enlisted force made very little money (between \$13,000 and \$20,000 for a year’s salary). “To someone having to raise a family on that income, commissaries are a very, very important benefit. It’s something we need to take seriously, and remember how important it is for our troops around the world.”

THE FIFTH DIRECTOR

When Wiedemer retired in 2004, Patrick B. Nixon, the agency’s chief executive officer under both Wiedemer and Courter, again became acting director. As a senior civilian member of the DeCA Transition Team, Nixon had helped to establish the agency. He subsequently became director of the agency’s Southwest and Northeast Regions, deputy director of the European Region, and director of the Eastern Region prior to accepting the position of chief executive officer in 2001. Starting in 2004, he served two years wearing two hats as the agency’s chief executive officer and acting director.

When Nixon officially became DeCA director in June 2006, he also continued as CEO. He was the first career civil servant to become the agency’s director. He had risen to this position entirely through the commissary ranks, and had experience with both the Army and the Marine Corps commissary systems. He was the first director of the Defense Commissary Agency with any store-level experience in both the commissaries and the civilian retail grocery business.

Nixon’s ideas were based upon a wealth of training and personal experience, as well as upon his vision of the future: shopping through the Internet, self-checkouts, computer-assisted ordering, a flexible workforce modeled on that in the commercial grocery sector, and the next generation of front-end checkouts, the Commissary

Advanced Resale Transition System (CARTS).

STORES OPENED AFTER 1999

By the late 1990s, modern stores and standardized layouts became important not only to designers and engineers, but to the customers and employees as well. DeCA’s goal had been to upgrade or replace every store in the agency by 2000. Every store would be attractive, with modernized equipment, standardized floor plans, and a DeCA décor package to make each store enjoyable, friendly, and familiar to customers all over the world.

DeCA’s newest stores had been top-notch from the very beginning, as the services’ commissary agencies had already been trying to modernize their facilities before the formation of DeCA. As time passed, DeCA leadership grew increasingly unwilling to simply follow the lead of civilian stores. Having been faced with one crisis



Patrick B. Nixon

after another, they recognized that one way out of the crisis mode was to keep a step ahead rather than follow behind. They now wanted—for the first time in commissary history—to be on the cutting edge of the grocery business. DeCA’s new stores would therefore include not only the best ideas and technology from civilian markets, but the best features that could possibly be projected as future state of the art.

One popular trend was toward “super-stores,” so some of DeCA’s new stores were immense. Consequently, they were equipped not only with oversized grocery carts, but also with electrically powered riding carts for customers needing mobility assistance. Another trend was for the convenience of one-stop shopping, so many of



DeCA’s new facilities were located in the same shopping mall as the local exchange facilities. Banks were sometimes placed inside the commissaries as a convenience to the customer. There were also those who felt that smaller stores were appropriate for many locales, with their primary strengths being their personalized customer service and shorter checkout lines, as well as their



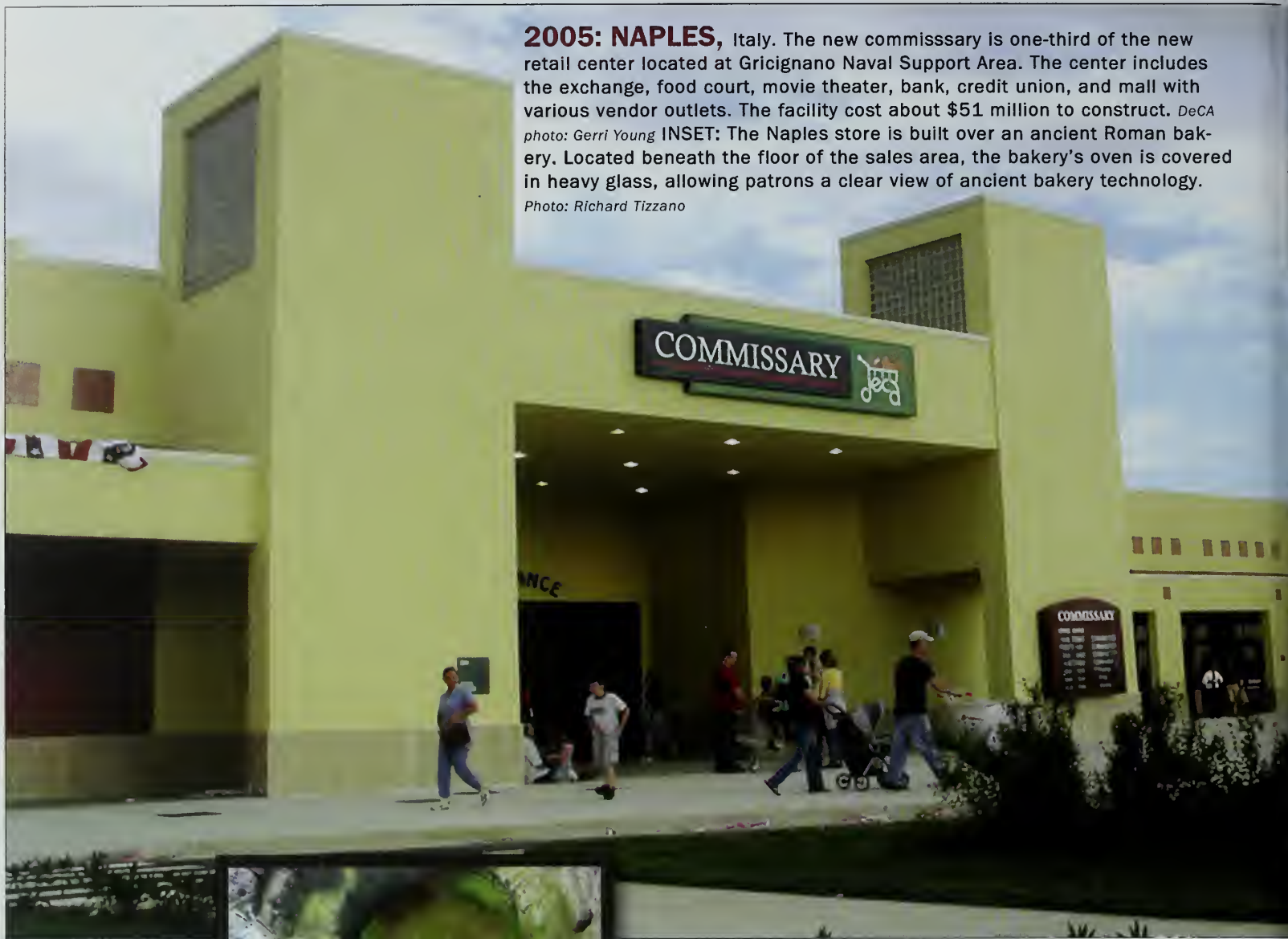
2004: GRAND FORKS, North Dakota. Store director Roy Hunnewell (left) welcomes a family to the July 13 grand opening of the new \$10-million store at Grand Forks Air Force Base, North Dakota. The facility was 47,000 square feet in size, with 21,000 square feet of sales area. Air Force photo: Tech Sgt. Anthony Tyrell

customers' ability to get in and out of the store quickly with small purchases.

DeCA leadership had debated about a new décor package for several years before settling on a design, which made its first store appearances in 2000. The décor was designed to make each store more lively and colorful, and contained symbols depicting the service that owned the installation on

which the store was located. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the décor designs were consistent throughout the system. That package, coupled with the new standard store designs, was aimed at making each store as familiar to newcomers as possible, creating a sense of familiarity that would assist the customers' shopping and encourage them to visit the store frequently.

By mid-2007, the agency had opened ninety-one new facilities since 1991, and had remodeled dozens more. Most new stores were replacements for obsolete facilities, but several were built at entirely new locations. (*A complete list of new store openings is available in the Appendices.*) Each new store was special or unique in its own way, both in outward appearance (which was sup-



2005: NAPLES, Italy. The new commissary is one-third of the new retail center located at Gricignano Naval Support Area. The center includes the exchange, food court, movie theater, bank, credit union, and mall with various vendor outlets. The facility cost about \$51 million to construct. DeCA photo: Gerri Young **INSET:** The Naples store is built over an ancient Roman bakery. Located beneath the floor of the sales area, the bakery's oven is covered in heavy glass, allowing patrons a clear view of ancient bakery technology.

Photo: Richard Tizzano

posed to blend with the local architecture) and in the reasons it was being built.

Stores designed and built by DeCA ranged from the "superstores" to

much smaller, convenience-store-sized commissaries with minimal sales.

At San Diego, an early version of what DeCA perceived as a "store of the future" opened in 2007. Although its role as a prototype was reconsidered and readjusted even as it was being built, many of its features would still be incorporated into new structures as local needs and conditions dictated (see pages 502-03, 522).

While such a designation as "most unique" is largely a matter of individual



opened in 2005 near Naples, Italy. It was built, along with the nearby housing area at Gricignano Naval Support Area, atop numerous archaeological sites that were several thousand years old, from the Roman era and earlier.

Many small artifacts were removed and placed in a special museum nearby, but some findings were too big to move, and were left, in archaeological terms, *in situ* (that is, on site), right where they were. Among these were portions of walls and

opinion, in a system where no two stores are exactly alike, it's possible that the one commissary most deserving of such an accolade was the new store that

foundations, a stone oven, and several ancient wells. U.S. and Italian authorities agreed that since the larger structures could not be moved, the commissary and exchange would be built over them. However, careful attention would be given to placing 2-inch-thick glass over key portions, which could then be viewed through the sales floors. Appropriately, the oven was on the commissary site; it probably had been part of an ancient Roman bakery. In the twenty-first-century store it can be viewed through the glass floor, near the shaving cream and baby items. (Its location did not lend itself to changing the floor plan in any way to place the new bakery above the old.)

STORE CLOSURES SLOW

Due to BRAC and service decisions, base and store closures after 1999 did not con-



continue at the previous pace. DeCA's challenge stayed the same: continue to provide for as many customers as possible despite any loss of facilities and any resultant loss of sales that lowered surcharge collections. Populations from closed bases went elsewhere and increased the customer base at their new stations. This repositioning would necessitate expanded commissary facilities at certain locations, even as others were shut down.

When CONUS bases or stores closed, nearby commissaries were considered as alternatives; if the distance was not prohibitive, many customers from the closed stores would find their way to those that remained open. DeCA therefore studied the remaining stores for possible improvements to cope with an expanding patron base.

Customers and employees alike became very attached to their stores. The patrons'

strong feelings manifested themselves when those stores closed. Some customers expected the commissary to remain open to continue fulfilling what they took as a promise, upon their enlistment, to provide them the benefit.

Most employees understood the need to close obsolete stores. A case in point was Pope Air Force Base, North Carolina, where a 1948-vintage fire station that had been converted into a bowling alley was later reconverted into a small grocery store. The Pope store would close within a year of the new Fort Bragg South Post store opening. Pope commissary employee Erma Powers understood. "To keep the Pope store open, it would really need renovation. The back room [which was the office area] is forty degrees in the winter, and is really, really hot in the summer."

When Kelly Air Force Base, Texas, closed in 2001, the commissary's meat department manager, Jesse Huerta, said he'd miss helping the young airmen plan their meals. "Some of the airmen from thirty-four years ago are now retired, they're still shopping here, and I'm still helping them," he said, with obvious pride. He and Dave Barrera, who had been Kelly's commissary officer/store director for eighteen years, had the satisfaction of knowing their customers had several other nearby commissaries in the San Antonio area from which to choose.

There were no alternative stores near Sierra Army Depot near Herlong, California, a classic "remote post." In 2001 the depot was closing, and the commissary would disappear as soon as all active duty personnel had left. Sierra store manager Wendy Matuszak, who had started work in the store twenty-three years previously as a bagger, worried, "Lots of our customers come from well over a hundred miles away, and this is going to be a hardship for them." She echoed the sentiments of many longtime, dedicated commissary employees who found themselves in similar situations. They had in common a most remarkable trait: They seemed far more concerned for their customers—especially retirees—than for themselves.

One constant in commissary history has

been the passion with which customers defend their stores. For example, when BRAC closed Marine Corps Air Base El Toro, California, in 1999, the Navy provided DeCA funds to keep the store open one additional year. Hoping to keep the store open beyond that, local retiree groups gained media attention with protest demonstrations and letters to Congress. Some who had served in combat felt they were being forgotten by the country for which they had risked their lives. While no additional funding was forthcoming and the store was closed, the retirees' efforts reaffirmed the importance eligible customers attach to their commissary benefit.

PROPOSED CLOSURES

It was one thing to close installations and commissaries in the 1990s, but it was quite another after September 11, 2001. Following the terrorist attacks and the subsequent actions taken by U.S. military forces, few patrons welcomed any sort of speculation about additional base or commissary closings. When a DoD memo in 2003 addressed exactly that subject, it encountered opposition.

The memo addressed the status of thirty-six commissaries, thirty-one of which had not met the criteria for continuing commissary operations. Of these, one had actually already closed, while another remained open, although its installation had closed. The memo approved the closure of nine stores (seven of them overseas) during fiscal 2004. But it also caught commissary shoppers' attention because it closed six stores in addition to what had already been approved, and named another nineteen to be scrutinized for possible closure. This doubled the number of military communities whose stores were facing possible closure in the near future.

It also raised eyebrows because commissaries were the only sources of reasonably priced American food products overseas—yet a number of OCONUS stores were on the list of nineteen potential closures. A number of CONUS stores that made the list were also cause for concern: some catered to a large retiree population, others had just recently been opened, and two fit

2000: THE NEIGHBORHOOD STORE at Mallonee Village, Fort Bragg, North Carolina, had been closed several weeks when this photo was taken in June. DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt



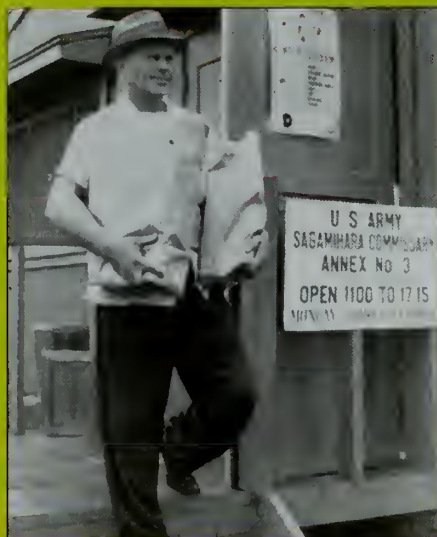
Remembering the Neighborhood Store

COMMISSARIES proliferated during and after World War II, but not nearly as quickly as the number of military bases themselves or the military family population. In most locations throughout the 1950s and 1960s, commissaries still remained low on the priority list for receiving funds for renovation, modernization, expansion, or outright replacement with a new facility.

That situation forced most bases to “make do” as best they could with whatever facilities they already had. If a commissary was inadequate and could not meet the needs of the local customers, and funds for building a new or renovated store were unavailable, one popular solution was to create a store annex or a branch store. Although the names differed, they were essentially the same: a small store, run by the main commissary, that extended the benefit to those who had neither the inclination to battle a crowd in the main store nor the opportunity to shop during the main store’s hours of operation. Customers needing just a few items could shop at an annex when the main store was crowded or closed, or when they needed one or two high-demand items such as milk, bread, eggs, cigarettes, or toilet paper.

This description sounds like a civilian-sector convenience store because these stores were, essentially, exactly that: stores established for the mutual convenience of the customer and the commissary staff. If it was too costly to keep the entire main store open all evening, the commissary officer sometimes found he could afford to pay one or two individuals to staff a branch store with a limited assortment of goods and longer hours of operation.

Sometimes, particularly on large bases, these annexes were estab-



1959: ANNEX 3, SAGAMIHARA, Japan. A customer leaving the store passes a sign showing the store was open a little more than six hours per day.

Military Market, Army Times Publications

lished as neighborhood stores and were similar to Vic Shuey’s Dairy Stop at Norton Air Force Base, California (*see feature, Chapter 8*). On smaller bases, they were usually separate areas within the main store building, but were walled off from the rest of the store. They kept different hours than the main store and were accessed by separate entrances.

There was no typical branch store, but a list of ideal annexes would have included the Midway Island neighborhood store, which opened in 1969 for Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia. Lt. Gen. Lewis J. Fields had spearheaded the store’s establishment when he realized that many enlisted families with less than four years’ service did not qualify for the limited on-base housing, and lived in the Midway Island community, located off base. They had a ten-mile drive to get to the commissary, a journey that was difficult for shoppers with children. Not only did Fields get the

store established, he also made sure that children were allowed inside. The store was open six days a week and carried four hundred line items, including disposable diapers, fifty baby food items, and small packages of chops and roasts, ideal for young families. The 1,440-square-foot annex was in the same building as a laundromat, making both services convenient for the shopper.

Some large bases had multiple annexes because of their dispersed populations. Sagami-hara, in Japan, had at least three by 1955. Of these, Annex No. 3, which was completely self-service, occupied a single small room with only one clerk stocker, a Japanese civilian named T. Sasaki, to run the place. In contrast, in the 1990s, the Mallonee Village store at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, one of four annexes to the post’s main store, had 3,500 line items and ten checkout lanes.

A variation on the theme was that of having some sort of drive-up or drive-through service. Most annexes and branches were walk-in stores, but drive-ins—also known as drive-throughs (or more colloquially, drive-thrus)—were available at some annexes as well as the main stores. The drive-thrus made quick shopping trips possible, because the customers never had to leave their vehicles. Customers could purchase a half-dozen items and be on their way in minutes.

Such was the case at Port Hueneme, California, in 1961. The drive-in annex was attached to the main store, but it reduced congestion in the main store and in the parking lot by enabling customers to shop without getting out of their cars. Fort Bragg's Annex No. 2 included a drive-in "Bread & Milk Bar." In 1975, the drive-in "Minicomstore" at Fort Lewis, Washington, served three hundred patrons per day. Customers stopped at a mailbox to obtain a pre-printed order form; after filling it out, they drove up to a window to submit and pay for their order. The patron then moved up to the receiving area while the order was filled. The order filler passed the groceries in a plastic container down a wheeled conveyor to the bag boy, who put the items in the customers' cars.

Some stores used the drive-in concept exclusively for parcel pick-up. This was especially popular at locations where there were not enough baggers to carry all customers' purchases to their cars. A customer would walk through the store as usual, making purchases, but at the register his groceries would be tagged with a number. When he drove to the pick-up window, he would present a matching claim ticket to the attendant. Some stores, such as the main commissary at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, in 1965, provided a roof or a partial overhang for the parcel pick-up area. Others, like Fort Hamilton, New York, left the area exposed to the weather (*see page 262*).

Later, the Army Troop Support Agency and the Air Force Commissary Service established special annexes attached to main stores. TSA called them "Mini Comstores" or "Mini Coms" while AFCOMS dubbed theirs "Wee Servs," a play on words reflecting the AFCOMS motto, "We Serve Where You Serve." But by whatever name they went, they were still annexes, with the same purposes as those created in the 1950s: to establish longer hours for customer convenience and to keep store congestion to a minimum.

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the trend was to build bigger stores rather than several small ones. The old annexes and neighborhood stores began to gradually disappear. In fact, there are now two posts on which two full-sized stores function, rather than annexes. By 1975, Fort Hood, Texas, had established the new Clear Creek store (36,000-square-foot sales area) to take over the lion's share of business from the older, smaller store. That older store was in turn replaced in



1959: THE ANNEX AT SAGAMIHARA, Japan, was small enough for one clerk, in this case, local national T. Sasaki, to manage. *Military Market, Army Times Publications*



1975: MANY ANNEXES, including those that were attached to a main store, experimented with drive-through service. This one was at the "Mini Comstore" at Fort Lewis, Washington.

Military Market, Army Times Publications

1994 by a new Warrior Way store (52,000 square feet of sales area, with twenty-four registers).

In 2000, Fort Bragg set the standard for the immediate future when it opened an ultramodern South Post "superstore" to complement its North Post commissary. The new store was huge, with 67,000 square feet of sales space and twenty-eight registers. The older North Post store, itself a good-sized facility, had a 42,000-square-foot sales area and twenty-two checkouts. When the day approached for the South Post store to open, one longtime annex, the Mallonee Village store in the middle of the post, closed. Within a year of the South Post opening, the store on neighboring Pope Air Force Base, one of the former annexes of the Bragg main store, was also closed.

The Defense Commissary Agency included many "store of the future" features in the construction of the new store at Naval Base San

Diego, California, which opened in 2007. It's not surprising that the San Diego store's central feature is a "store-within-a-store," a modernized version of the old annex concept.

Some ideas are so good, they may change their names, but they never go out of style.

the traditional “remote posts” definition: there were, literally, no other shopping options. One of the posts (White Sands, New Mexico) was particularly isolated, with the nearest civilian grocery store more than 26 miles away.

Responding to patrons’ concerns, Congress had the Government Accountability Office (GAO) study the proposed closures. The resultant draft report, “Policy and Criteria Used to Assess Potential Commissary Store Closures,” came out in April 2005, quickly followed by another GAO report, “DoD needs to Improve the Transparency and Reassess the Reasonableness, Appropriateness, Affordability, and Sustainability of its Military Compensation System.” These reports reaffirmed the commis-

saries remained a vital quality of life benefit. DoD, however, had already reevaluated its initial assessment, and reassured Congress, and the customers, that many of the stores would in fact remain open; the inclusion of nineteen additional stores in its memo had only been for study, not for definite removal. DoD issued new policy guidance, concurring with congressional assessments that quality of life regarding store closures would continue to be a primary consideration for active duty and members of the Guard and Reserves.

As things later developed, some of the closures originally suggested by the department were borne out when BRAC recommended the closure or downsizing of their bases. Eventually, many of the stores DoD had named would actually close.

OVERSEAS STORE REPOSITIONING

By 2005, Defense Department officials were speaking of significantly shrinking U.S. forces in Germany, putting more American forces in Africa, eastern Europe, and western Asia, and repositioning troops in South Korea. These plans, called by some “the most radical redeployment of American forces since the end of the Cold War,” were driven by the increasing importance the U.S. placed on the Middle East, Africa, and Korea in the post-Cold War world.

“Fluid” was probably the best way to describe the overseas situation. It would be viable, and important, to keep the commissary benefit overseas, and theater commanders would need to include the commissaries in their contingency plans for new locations. In the short run, if installa-



2004: CAMP PAGE, South Korea. Yong Sik Pak, grocery manager at Camp Page, stands next to a sign that heralds the approval in 2003 of full-time shopping privileges for the Guard and Reserve, prompted by their increasing role in the armed services. DeCA photo courtesy of Camp Page commissary

tion commanders could provide a building, DeCA would figure out how to transform the structure and get the goods there.

As to local support for the overseas commissaries, Bonnie Kanitz, a former director of the European Region, said, "The European community is tight-knit, and DeCA is considered the major contributor to our armed forces' quality of life. Our senior military leadership recognizes our importance to the military community, directly impacting recruitment, readiness, and retention. They take it very personally when the commissary benefit is under attack."

That attitude was unlikely to change.

PROPOSED STIPEND

Commissaries are almost always included in the annual report of the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) as a program to reduce or eliminate. The bipartisan CBO report examines a wide range of budget-cutting options, and while it does not specifically endorse any of the alternatives it offers, the office enumerates the pros and cons for lawmakers making federal spending decisions.

A CBO report issued in 2005 repeated portions of its own earlier reports that advocated the elimination or the privatization of commissaries. The report claimed the Pentagon could save \$2.4 billion in four years if it closed all the commissaries, while providing a \$500 annual grocery allowance to active-duty troops, which would be adjusted by family size or pay grade. DeCA believed the figures were unrealistic, since they were far lower than what military families actually saved at the commissaries. Nor did the proposal make allowances for military retirees on fixed incomes, who would pay more annually for groceries in the absence of commissaries.

Just ten years previously, the CBO itself had reported that "the loss of commissary benefits would have an impact on military retention. A decrease in retention would lead to increased training and recruiting costs, or would require increasing some other benefit to maintain current retention levels."

ADVANCES IN COMMISSARY TECHNOLOGY

Technology has continually changed the face of the commissaries since their inception in 1867. A transformation has taken place in every aspect of the commissary shopping experience, and has gradually altered the very nature of the stores themselves. Changes have included construction materials and methods; refrigeration; electric lighting; the automobile for getting there, and motorized trucks to deliver goods to the store; paved parking lots; the shopping cart; packaging and product proliferation; heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC); complex agricultural and delivery systems; and advancements in cash registers, scanning, and pricing; and new products and new packaging methods. The all-volunteer military and the increasing importance of the benefit itself, of course, has also influenced the facilities: New or modernized stores are the rule, while makeshift stores—once far and away the majority—have now become the exception.

Reaching the Customer. As time passed, DeCA's diminishing customer base—including retirees, active duty, and family members—was becoming worrisome. Store closures had reduced the number of retirees living within driving distance of a commissary. Many World War II and Korean War veterans were dying every day, while the rolls of the active-duty military have been shrinking since the end of the Cold War. To make up for the loss of customers, the agency would sell more to those they did have, and would also attract new shoppers.

American forces were still positioned on a Cold War footing. Forces that were expensive to maintain, and no longer needed where they were, had to be repositioned, and possibly reduced. There were uncertainties; for example, would the force of the future be one of younger and mostly single individuals, or would it continue to be dominated by young families? Would families in South Korea be repositioned farther away from the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ)? Would forces go into former Warsaw Pact countries in eastern Europe,

at new bases aimed at maintaining stability in the Far East and Middle East?

DeCA wanted to attract people from a wider area around each installation, especially those who did not yet shop in the commissaries because of distance concerns. But with rising gasoline prices threatening to eat up major portions of the customers' 30 percent savings in 2006-2007, DeCA found itself challenged to figure out how it would continue to attract customers who had to drive more than a few miles in order to patronize a commissary. Possibilities included Internet sales, new merchandise, and new merchandising campaigns. Whatever form it took, something different was needed if DeCA was to remain healthy and an important symbol of the military's commitment to its own people.

DeCA leadership was determined that a declining patron base would not interfere with new opportunities to grow and improve. The agency had a good strategic plan, a good way of introducing new technologies, and a directorate of corporate planning that would help the agency keep pace with technological and demographic changes. One hope was that more people would want to shop at the commissary for reasons beyond the savings. Patrons would return if shopping at the commissary was simpler, faster, and easier than shopping anywhere else.

The Virtual Commissary. DeCA Web sites have been providing essential information on the agency and each of its stores since the late 1990s. DeCA's public Web site, www.commissaries.com, is filled with information useful to customers. In 2005 it began to provide access for computer-assisted ordering, on a small scale. Soon, customers may be able to do the majority of their shopping online.

In 2004, DeCA Director Maj. Gen. Michael Wiedemer had said he believed the Internet could make commissary shopping a practical reality for those not close enough, mobile enough, or healthy enough to actually shop at a store. There was no reason to "deny this great, great benefit" to those potential customers. Such a move would be a particular boon to people who had chosen their retirement locations to be

close to a commissary, only to lose their stores to base closure or realignment.

Internet shopping was in some ways a throwback to the days when customers could telephone their orders to the store, and the goods would either be delivered to their doorsteps or would be waiting at the store to be picked up. Now DeCA aimed to use computers to render the same result, though the goods would not come from a local commissary. Instead, DeCA explored contracting with private firms already in the Internet grocery business to deliver goods to authorized commissary shoppers. The shoppers would enjoy discounted prices, while DeCA would collect the 5 percent surcharge from all sales. As envisioned, orders would be placed

through the DeCA Web site to the third-party provider.

By 2006, DeCA had one vendor (for gift baskets) for the Internet on board, and had begun to deploy the system. It was not yet a comprehensive shopping experience, but it was a start. As the proverb says, a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step, and that initial step had been taken.

The Virtual Commissary initially consisted of products already being sold on commercial Web sites, but being made available to commissary customers at lower prices. As more vendors participated, the item count grew. By late 2007, Acting Director Rick Page envisioned customers being able to place an order by Internet or phone, and then picking up their filled orders within a

few hours—either at their commissary, or at special “on-site” sales at special locations, bringing the benefit to Guard, Reserve, and retiree customers who did not live near a commissary.

From the standpoint of reaching out to the customers (in fact, the practice had officially become known as Outreach), DeCA had a chance to become an industry leader because of big sales opportunities with the Guard and Reserve.

Another investment in technology for the commissary agency was the global enterprise data warehouse. This system used industry’s best practices for analyzing item sales data from eight million business transactions, which were loaded daily from all stores. This transformed DeCA’s supply chain management by providing improved industry response to store orders,

thus increasing sales and reducing inventory costs.

Electric Carts. Future technological innovations will probably include new electronic security measures for entering and leaving the store, and using retina scans or electronic fingerprints for both identification and for payment.

Electric-riding shopping carts, currently used by elderly, disabled, and injured individuals, will become more commonplace, but it’s probably safe to say that the 1960s predictions of traffic lights at aisle intersections will never become popular. Nor will self-propelled aisles, with patrons gliding about on conveyors. Stores that are entirely push-button may someday make minor inroads, but only at very small commissaries where the clientele is limited. Drive-in or drive-through commissaries have seen their day, and are unlikely to make a comeback, but mini-coms and stores within stores with extended hours and limited stock lists may become more common.

Self-Checkouts. It was, seemingly, a paradox that people with more free time on their hands than ever were also busier than ever, but it was logical enough: Americans were moving faster and trying to do more in every twenty-four-hour day. Whatever the reasons and contributing factors, from fast food to self-serve gas pumps, it was tough to find people standing still.

In such a fast-paced existence, standing in line seemed like a tremendous waste of time, and was to be avoided if possible. For years, commissaries had express lines, or special rules allowing uniformed customers to go to the front of the line during lunch hour. Maj. Gen. Robert J. Courter’s Grab-N-Go sections had aimed to speed things up even more.

Self-checkouts had been tried, without much success, by the Navy in 1990, but by 2004 the technology had improved, and major civilian retailers were using them at supercenters. That year, civilian-sector, self-checkout systems in North America processed transactions worth \$70 billion. “The 2004 North American Self-Checkout Systems Market Study” projected that number would rise to over \$330 billion by 2007.

The technical problems were being

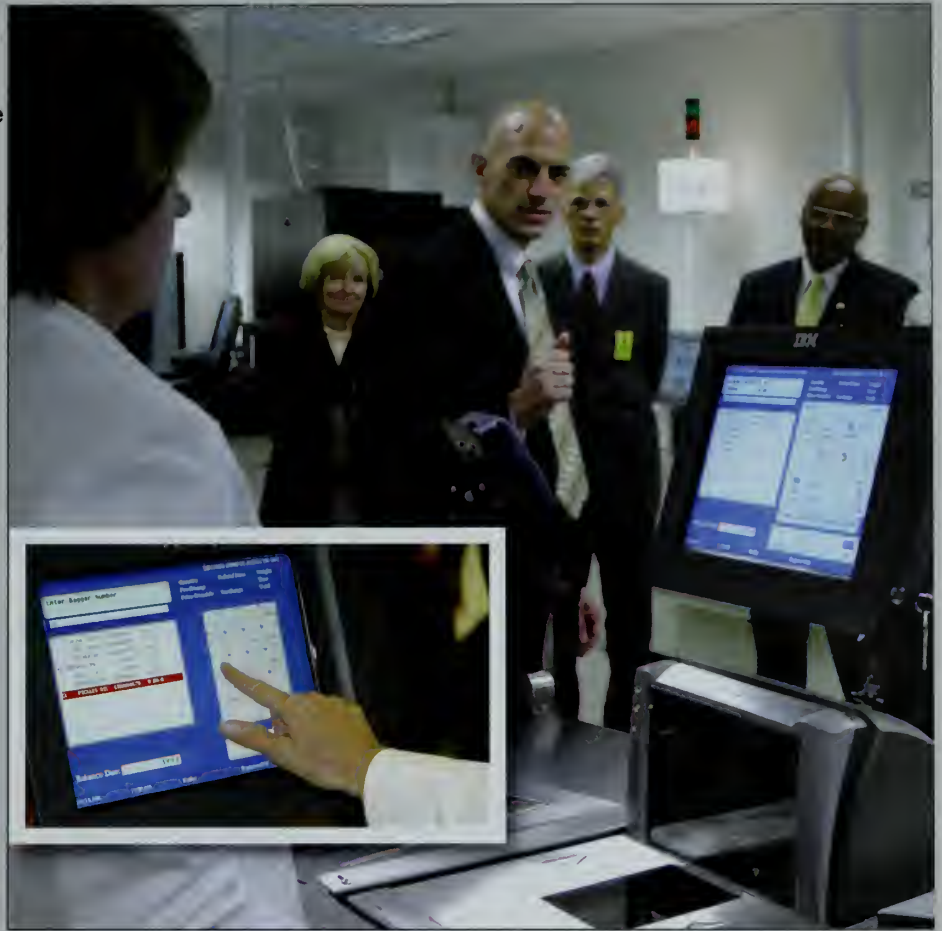
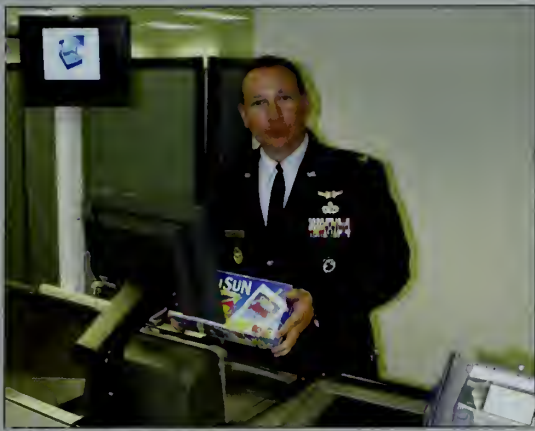


2004: SELF-CHECKOUTS. Customer Marina Scott goes through the steps of using the self-checkout machine at Langley Air Force Base, Virginia, during a roll-out of the new technology in February 2004. The self-checkouts’ initial deployment was at Langley. Fort Sam Houston, Texas, and McClellan, California, were next. By 2005, some twenty-five commissaries had self-checkouts to complement their regular front-end systems.

DeCA photo: Rick Brink

2006: NEW POINT-OF-SALE.

RIGHT PHOTO: Mike Puma, (center) IBM's point-of-sale engagement manager, conducts a tour of DeCA's new front-end system, CARTS — the Commissary Advanced Resale Transaction System — at the opening of the CARTS System Integration Lab July 28 at Fort Lee, Virginia. The new technology includes the cash cage, back office, wireless registers, full-lane self-checkout for large orders and "Express Plus" self-checkout for smaller orders. *DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt.* **INSET PHOTO:** A self-checkout key pad. *DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt.* **BELOW:** Col. Gregory Juday, director of program management, scans a few items during a demonstration. *DeCA photo: Rick Brink*



worked out, and as the checkouts became more reliable, customers slowly warmed up to them. DeCA had several stores experimenting with them, and by mid-2005 it seemed clear that there was a place for the self-checkout system in the commissaries, especially for people buying only a few items at a time. Self-checkouts in selected stores were netting an average of 20 percent of those stores' total transactions in 2005.

CARTS. In 2004, DeCA began planning for the Commissary Advanced Resale Transaction System (CARTS), the latest word in off-the-shelf, state-of-the-art technology for DeCA's front end checkout system and back-office support. On the last day of 2005, DeCA ushered in the future by awarding a \$270-million, five-year (with five-year option) CARTS Information Technology support contract to IBM. CARTS would replace the Point of Sale Modernization (POS-M) system installed years before, as well as its "technical refresh" upgrade (POS-TR). In August 2006, a ribbon-cutting ceremony

at DeCA headquarters kicked off the official opening of the CARTS System Integration Lab. The lab was the first phase in evaluating the new front-end system before sending it to the field for store testing. It's projected to be completed and online in all the stores in 2008.

Much of what DeCA does is on the cutting edge of grocery operations. With CARTS, the agency went to great lengths to ensure patrons received the highest return possible on that investment. The deployment of CARTS, Nixon believed, would "dramatically improve our stores' point-of-sale systems and as a result make us more efficient and effective."

CARTS is the next generation of front-end operations because of its ease of use, higher reliability and automated cash management capabilities. Meanwhile, the DeCA Interim Business System (DIBS) from the mid-1990s would become the DeCA Electronic Business System (DEBS), designed to standardize and simplify the agency's cataloging, ordering, receiving, and inventory accountability.

OTHER TECHNOLOGIES ON THE WAY

Electronic Tags. In 2004, the Defense Department announced that Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology should be adopted by January 2005 in every possible defense application. The function of RFID was to track any and all shipment containers carrying DoD materials, whether it was ordnance or oranges, by using tags that could receive and send signals, enabling the container to be identified and located.

Since RFID was not limited to retail functions, literally dozens of other agencies and organizations were going to start using the system. DoD was eager to implement it as soon as possible to add another layer of security to its operations.

The announced implementation date, however, proved overly optimistic. DeCA, AAFES, and NAVRESSO all asked for extensions beyond the initial deadline, and the Pentagon assented.

DeCA, already having approval to implement RFID in 2008, was expected to

DeCA and its **INDUSTRY PARTNERS**

SINCE 1867, COMMISSARIES have sold goods that were grown by civilian farmers and were produced, packaged, and shipped by the civilian food industry. As time passed and the food industry produced an increasing number of goods, the military received bigger savings on growing stock lists. This is largely due to the commissaries' longtime partnership with civilian industry.

Following World War I, the grocery industry began playing a bigger role in supplying commissaries and exchanges. As a direct result, the Quartermaster Association was incorporated in 1920. It was composed of officers of the regular Army, the National Guard, the Reserves, and civilians in key positions in industry and the federal government. Its members promoted a spirit of cooperation and the friendly interchange of ideas between industry and the military.

In 1961 the Quartermaster Association became the Defense Supply Association (DSA). The name was changed to approximate that of the newly formed Defense Supply Agency, located at Cameron Station near Washington, D.C. Under the Defense Department's single-manager concept, although the Quartermaster Corps would no longer be directly responsible for Army commissaries, it assumed increased responsibility in providing food, clothing, and other supplies to all the armed forces. Industry would assist the effort through the association.

DSA changed its name to the American Logistics Association (ALA) in 1972 to better reflect its mission—as well as to end acronym confusion with the Defense Supply Agency. The ALA's *Review* magazine explained the name: *American* reflected the "pride of patriotism," *Logistics* encompassed "the details of transport and supply," and *Association* signified people unified by "a particular activity or purpose."

Two years later, ALA reorganized into a national trade association, led by a board of directors comprised of industry leaders. The reorganization was designed to serve industry's interests in military and other government activities. ALA would play an increasing role in commissary supply and support, coordinating numerous conventions and events that promoted the commissary benefit. For years it hosted the annual "best commissary" awards presented by each service.

The effect civilian industry had on commissaries became evident at store level, where product proliferation—experienced years earlier by civilian markets—finally began affecting commissary stock lists. In large stores the lists grew from a few thousand items in 1973 to nearly fourteen thousand by the late 1980s. Commissary customers are well aware of industry's assistance in providing the benefit, and have come to expect its participation in special product promotions, frequent truckload and case lot sales, and other special events. Numerous industry prizes and giveaways, as well as colorful product mascots, have become traditional at commissary grand openings and reopenings, adding fun and excitement to what in the "old days" was almost a non-event.

Today, ALA is a voluntary, non-profit trade organization including



▲ **1993: CAMP PENDLETON, California.** Product symbols create instant brand-name recognition. Some major manufacturers' symbols come alive as larger-than-life mascots, who attend special events such as this commissary's grand opening, adding whimsy and child-friendly excitement to the occasion. DeCA photo courtesy Southwest Region

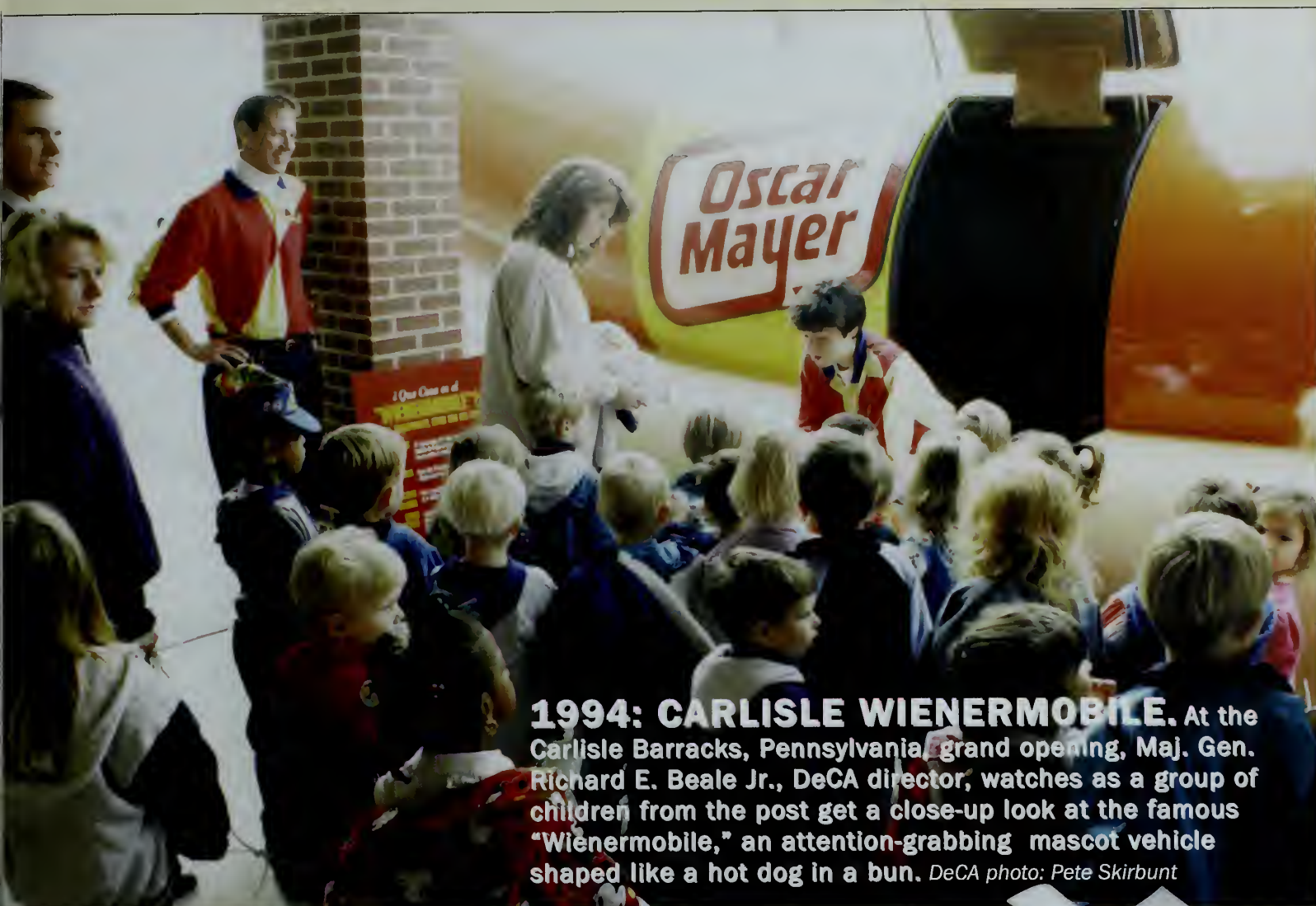


▲ **1994: CARLISLE BARRACKS, Pennsylvania.** Dick Murray and his wife, Jan, look over some of the sales items at the grand opening of the Carlisle Barracks commissary in November. Murray, a retired Air Force major general, had once been the commander of AAFES; in 1994 he was serving as president of the American Logistics Association (ALA).

DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt

manufacturers, vendors, suppliers, brokers, distributors, and media groups which conduct business within the federal government's military resale markets. Its mission promotes, protects, and ensures the continued existence and viability of military commissaries, exchanges, and canteen services. ALA seeks to foster business and political relations that are mutually beneficial to the military and industry. It provides a forum where industry and the military resale systems can solve mutual problems, explore opportunities, reach business solutions, and enhance its members' business, while still providing substantial savings to military families.

DeCA and ALA consider themselves partners striving for the best prices for military shoppers. However, although their interests are parallel, they are not identical. Because of the amount of money generated by the military resale systems, the commissaries and exchanges have always been careful not to step over the line dividing mutually beneficial business practices from questionable practices or unfair advantages.



1994: CARLISLE WIENERMOBILE. At the Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, grand opening, Maj. Gen. Richard E. Beale Jr., DeCA director, watches as a group of children from the post get a close-up look at the famous "Wienermobile," an attention-grabbing mascot vehicle shaped like a hot dog in a bun. DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt



▲ **2002: MINOT** Air Force Base, North Dakota. Vicki Rose, a vendor stocker, arranges a display for a store demonstration. DeCA photo courtesy Minot commissary

◀ **1996: OCEANA**, Virginia. Ricky Terry, a vendor stocker from WEBCO, sorts snacks at Naval Air Station Oceana. DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt

ask for a 2010 date of implementation due to the growing technologies involved. By 2010, all flaws were expected to be out of the system, making implementation at that point more logical, less troublesome, and less costly than it would have been at the 2008 date.

Probably the most exciting new technology being tested in civilian markets in 2005 was the Shop-N-Scan, a system allowing patrons to scan and bag groceries as they shopped. Customers could scan their selections as they placed them in the cart, and receive a running total of their bill.

Theoretically, by adding RFID to the system, and combining it with credit card, retina, or fingerprint scan (either at entry or the exit), customers and all their purchases would be electronically linked. Such a cart would enable shoppers to simply pass under a checkout scanning system that would automatically bill their debit or credit cards.

Some predictions say the size of shopping baskets will nearly double today's capacities. Bigger carts may require wider aisles, which would necessitate fundamental design changes in the stores. That will also drive a number of changes: the loads

that shopping carts bear will get heavier, requiring either motorized carts or carts that literally float down the aisle on a cushion of air. Customers who have bad backs or other infirmities, and elderly customers, especially, could certainly use such a device.

These new technologies will not be placed in stores that belong in the past. Those will disappear, while possibilities engendered by the many emerging technologies have encouraged the creation of new concepts and methodologies for building and running a supermarket. But like everything else, commissaries will continue



2005: 'STORE OF THE FUTURE.' Officials break ground on May 26 to signify the beginning of construction on the Naval Base San Diego, California, commissary. They are (from left): Terry Rhyne, Hensel Phelps International; Christy Beveridge, Navy Region Southwest ombudsman; Richard Page, who at the time was DeCA West director; Capt. Derek B. Kemp, commanding officer, Naval Base San Diego; John Stuit, DeCA project manager; and Gene Rice, store director. When completed in the spring of 2007 it was the largest U.S. military commissary in the world.

U.S. Navy photo: JO1 Jason McKnight

to change and experiment with new ideas. As the predictions of the 1960s have shown, not every concept will come to fruition, and some that do may actually prove to be unpopular or counterproductive.

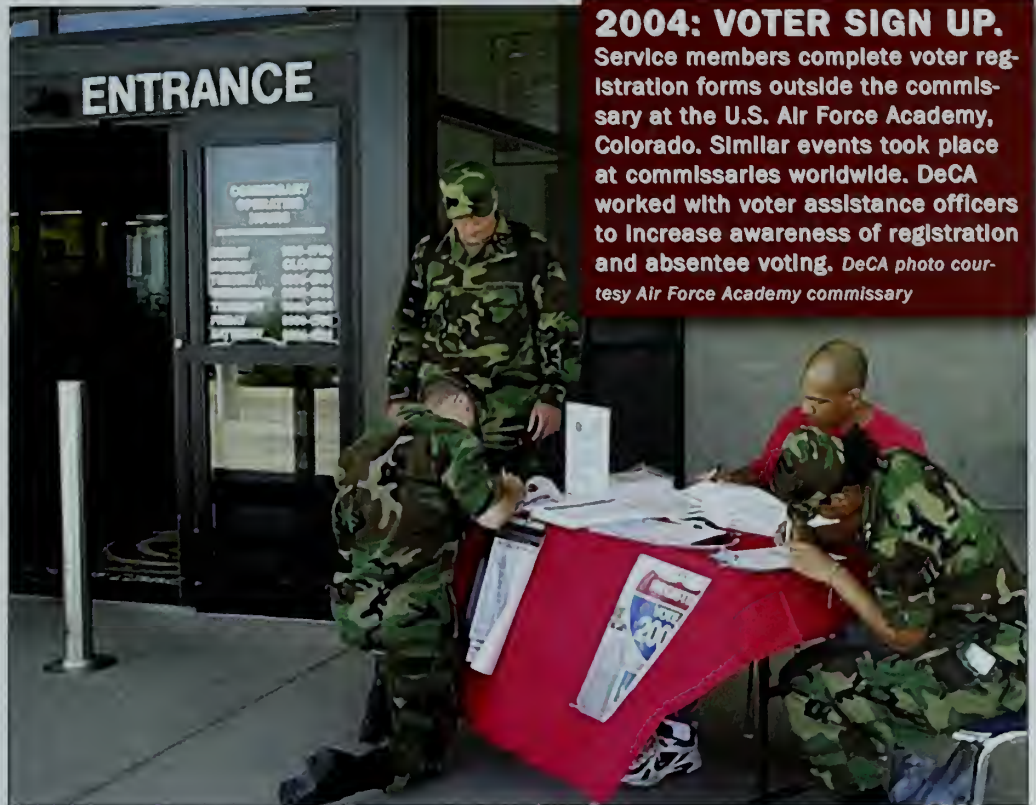
THE 'STORE OF THE FUTURE'

DeCA's "store of the future" started to become reality in May 2005 when officials broke ground for the first commissary to be built with features projected for future commissaries. This was at Naval Base San Diego (in years past it had often been called the 32nd Street Naval Station), and the store opened in spring 2007. It was bigger than all previous commissaries, with nearly 128,000 square feet overall, almost 70,000 of which was sales floor. There are 29 checkout counters, of which 21 are full-service and 8 self-service registers.

But even as the store was being built, some ideas as to exactly what a "store of the future" should be began to change. In fact, it is a fluid concept, constantly changing, responding to new methodologies, new products, new building materials, and new customer demands.

The realization that not all stores would need to be so large inspired several adjustments. Shoppers, particularly younger ones, already have less disposable time that they're willing to devote to activities like food shopping, and a large store is more likely to lengthen a shopping trip than a small store. DeCA realized it was going to have to find ways not only to attract customers to the stores and provide what they were looking for, but also to make it easy for them to get their shopping done quickly, and get them checked out with as little waiting as possible.

DeCA's stores of the future would target both the convenience shopper and the pantry-loading shopper, for whom they will have two separate entrances. On the convenience side, they might be "stores-within-stores," with all the items that someone needs to get in and get out in a hurry. They would have to have self-checkouts. A "store-within-a-store" would be open for extended hours. The line of demarcation separating the main store from the convenience store



would be the frozen-food section, which would be used by both the major-purchase pantry-loaders and the convenience shoppers.

Stores of the future will probably center themselves around wellness and healthful sections, with more organic, nutritious products, and more emphasis on quality produce. DeCA would help its customers of all ages get in shape nutritionally. By 2007, the stores had already been focusing on nutrition, wellness, and healthful products—like DeCA's partnership with the military healthcare provider, TRICARE, in the "It's Your Choice, Make It Healthy" campaign—to get the right nutritional information to the customer.

SOCIAL INITIATIVES

An important DeCA initiative was its Commissary Career Program (CCP), designed to ensure that DeCA has a well-trained and competent workforce to generate tomorrow's leaders. The program was revised to improve candidate recruitment, referral, and job placements resulting in an increase in the representation of women and ethnic or racial minorities, especially Hispanic-Americans and Asian-Americans; DeCA already had a good EEO record, and all groups were well-represented in the

DeCA workforce.

From the start DeCA was dedicated to assuring the agency was in compliance with federal standards for equal employment opportunity and affirmative action. The agency earned several awards for its exemplary record in maintaining fair standards in hiring, proper treatment of its employees, and prompt resolution of work-related complaints.

In 1992, DeCA had initiated an annual awards program to recognize excellence in EEO practices throughout the agency. DeCA's EEO office also fostered the creation of a special events committee that produced several programs to educate agency employees about the many ethnic, racial, and religious groups represented on DeCA's workforce. These events, ranging from a Holocaust Remembrance day to multi-cultural programs that included food and performances by dancing and musical troupes, were well-received and fostered a mutual respect and understanding, bringing the "DeCA family" closer together.

The agency had an ongoing relationship with the National Industries for the Severely Handicapped (NISH) and National Industries for the Blind (NIB), as DeCA carried NISH-and NIB-made household products for sale in its commis-



2005: HANAU, Germany. The spacious retail floor as seen from the store director's office. The store offers nearly ten thousand grocery items.

DeCA photo courtesy Hanau commissary



CANNED SOUPS
PASTA SAUCES
PASTA
GOURMET FOODS

5



saries. At the headquarters, a cafeteria operating under the auspices of the Commonwealth of Virginia's Business Opportunities for the Blind (BOB) served employees, vendors, and visiting DeCA personnel from all over the world. DeCA's Small Business office assured that small businesses, including female-and-minority-owned businesses, had a fair and equal chance of securing DeCA contracts.

COMMISSARY OUTREACH

The consumer advocate position that had begun functioning in 1998 became particularly important once the National Guard and Reserves received unlimited shopping privileges late in 2003. A new group of full-time shoppers had to be educated about their commissary benefit—and most especially about their sizable savings.

Meanwhile, DeCA's office of corporate communications worked with the market-

ing business unit to create a marketing strategy aimed at attracting new customers (particularly the young or single soldier, sailor, Marine, and airman) and keep the longtime customers coming back more often. Efforts included a DeCA display booth and spokesperson at numerous military association conventions and events, cooking classes, commissary tours, special events geared toward young military families, and promotional posters (*see p. 467, this chapter*) that included prominent military shoppers—such as retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Chuck Yeager and one of the public's favorite participants in the popular "Survivor" television show, retired Navy SEAL Rudy Boesch—were endorsements aimed at all military shoppers, young and old.

Outreach, as a program and an ideal, continued spreading good news about the commissaries through various media, military associations, and military training

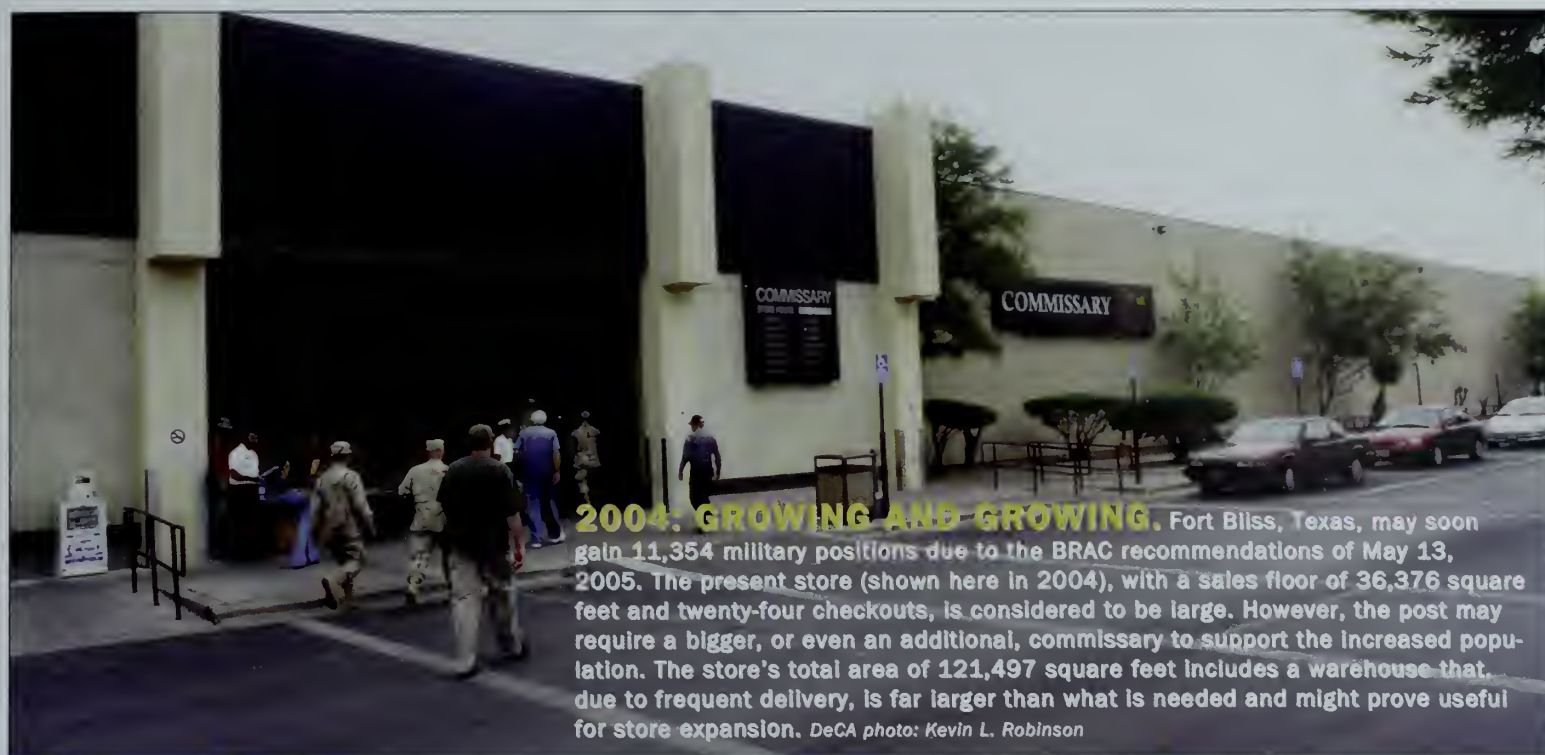
activities. These efforts took on different forms, from meeting people at conventions and organizational events, to visiting recruit depots and having new troops visit a commissary, to see the benefit's value in person. As more installations and commanding officers got the message, outreach efforts improved and intensified as more people used their creativity to develop new ways of spreading the word about the commissaries' cost savings.

The outreach program was especially successful at informing young service members, the National Guard, and the Reserves about the benefits of commissary shopping. DeCA worked with its industry partners to develop gift certificates and coupon books geared toward Guard and Reserve families.

One of the bigger outreach efforts involved the establishment of an annual worldwide case lot (also known as a "truck-load") sale, for which DeCA had the help of many of its vendors. The first of these events, which eventually spread worldwide, occurred in the summer of 2001. At the closed post of Fort McClellan, Alabama, a case lot sale brought the benefit to retired, Guard, Reserve, and active-duty personnel, who didn't have a commissary near their home.

The education of new and unmarried service members was of vital importance. One of the great, long-standing misconceptions among new enlisted people is that they are not eligible to use the commissary unless they are married. For decades, this misinformation has been passed from one recruit to the next. Under DeCA, a concerted outreach effort began to break that misconception. On-post television spots and base newspaper articles were used, and thousands of single service members were encouraged to tour the stores and experience the benefit for themselves, in an effort to break the cycle of misunderstanding.

Helping spread the word was the Consumer Awareness Team, an industry committee supporting DeCA outreach goals, which funds commissary gift certificates to be used as prizes or giveaways during commissary tours. Local vendors often supported tour activities with food and



additional giveaways for service members.

It wasn't always the customers doing the touring. The "Meal Solutions for the Military Family" promotional tour, aimed at young enlisted families, consisted of several "Traveling Chefs." The chefs were graduates of the Florida Culinary Institute, giving two-hour in-store demonstrations at thirty commissaries in 2001.

Existing programs, including Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers (BOSS), Unmarried Marine, and Navy Liberty programs also provided commissary tours. In 2002, the agency took primary responsibility for combining these established efforts with the inauguration of the first Commissary Awareness Month. The event encourages young active duty and single service members to visit the commissary—sometimes for the first time ever—to learn about their benefit and commissary savings. This month-long event gave rise to entirely new forms of promotion, emphasizing the amount of savings and the types of healthful foods available at the commissary. By 2005, the annual program had a

record number of participants, with more than eighty stores taking part worldwide.

First Term Airmen Centers got involved in 2004. These centers aid airmen, married and single, assigned to their first duty station, with the transition from regimented training environments to regular Air Force life. At the time, one of DeCA's most important priorities was to make sure all members of the armed services knew about their commissary benefit.

As time passed, DeCA also made increasingly sophisticated efforts to solicit patron opinion and advice. "Your Action Line" (YAL) cards for comment and feedback were available at every store. Local community commissary advisory councils met regularly with their local store director to talk about store hours, product availability, and levels of service. On the command level, DeCA began its retiree council initiative in 1998 to provide a forum for retiree groups to interact with the agency to protect the benefit and to communicate their needs to the DeCA director. Eventually, the retiree council was combined with the

patron council, which represented customers of all ages. Local focus groups with young and single active-duty members supplemented the work of the patron council.

BRAC 2005

After several years of calm and relative inactivity regarding base closures, the first list for 2005's BRAC cycle came out on May 13, 2005. It included ten bases for closure on which DeCA had commissaries. For some installations, the list called for troop reductions that would seriously impact local commissary operations. BRAC 2005 also proposed sizable troop increases at bases with commissary facilities that might not be adequate to support the new populations. Thus, DeCA might lose some facilities while gaining or expanding others. This list was the first proposal; it was not final. The commission soon added Naval Air Station Oceana, Virginia, to the list of possible closures.*

The list was finalized in September. Among bases with commissaries, the commission decided Ellsworth Air Force Base,

*— Initially, BRAC 2005 proposed closures at ten bases with commissary sales stores: New London (Groton), Connecticut; Naval Supply Corps School, Athens, Fort Gillem, and Fort McPherson, Georgia; Fort Monmouth, New Jersey; Naval Support Activity New Orleans, Louisiana; Naval Shipyard Portsmouth, New Hampshire/Maine; Cannon Air Force Base, New Mexico; C. E. Kelly Support Facility, Oakdale, Pennsylvania; and Ellsworth Air Force Base, South Dakota. The addition of Naval Air Station Oceana, Virginia, raised the total to eleven bases with commissaries. Ellsworth, New London, and Portsmouth were soon taken off the list.

Submitted, for Your Consideration: Commissary Ghost folklore

You are invited to briefly suspend whatever disbelief you have in the paranormal, and consider the genre of folklore commonly called "the ghost story."

Although few historians ever tread here, ghost stories are as old as recorded history. For centuries, tales of hauntings and apparitions have been reported all over the world. Even skeptics accept such stories as legitimate folklore. Since commissary ghost stories are plentiful, ignoring them in this history would be a disservice.

Knowing there is no way to convince skeptics, and fearing the stigma and ridicule their stories may provoke, many who experience such phenomena keep their experiences to themselves. It is therefore likely that for every story we hear, there are many more that go unreported. But the skeptics are as clueless as anyone regarding the most important question of all, in which everyone becomes interested, sooner or later: Is there life after death? That, of course, is the key question at the center of one's belief in ghosts.

All of the accounts given here concern commissaries that have been closed. Since there are surely many more stories, we may hear about them after this book is published. If so, they may be included in the second edition. In deference to those who have come forward on the subject, I have kept their names confidential. The reader should be aware that all who related their stories attested they were telling the truth, and most had corroborating witnesses. Of course, as with all matters of personal belief, the reader is free to decide the veracity of these stories for himself; only consider, if you will, that all life is a miracle and a mystery, and there is more to this world than we know or understand.—Author

GHOST STORIES ARE an important part of our national folklore. The fictitious Legend of Sleepy Hollow, the reported apparitions of Lincoln's ghost in the White House, the many local tales of spirits on battlefields, in old houses, at train wreck sites, and the like—there are thousands of regionally or locally famous stories. Traditional histories are about people who have come and gone; a ghost story is a tale of someone who should have gone on, but apparently has lagged behind.

Tales of ghosts abound on military installations, and are usually connected with old buildings, in which many individuals worked or lived over many years. Some of those individuals later departed this life suddenly, violently, or tragically—many in battle, others in accidents. Such circumstances, traditionally, can cause hauntings. Since many an old commissary started out as a stable, riding hall, mess hall, aircraft hangar, library, warehouse, dormitory or barracks, through which hundreds or even thousands of personnel passed, it's not surprising that there are a sizable number of commissary ghost stories.

Most accounts of commissary ghosts are not well known, because people tend to keep them quiet. Some who experience "paranormal" events fear that others will think they're unhinged. Others are simply unnerved, and don't want to talk about it. Even when personal embarrassment is not an issue, no one wants to frighten away customers or employees!

Some people, though, are straightforward about their experiences. Similar to the battle-hardened, no-nonsense pilots who reported seeing "foo fighters" (today we'd call them UFOs) during World War II, these witnesses are low-key, matter-of-fact individuals who long ago gave up any hope of convincing anyone. Their attitude is simple: "I saw it, and I really don't care if you believe me or not!"

Significantly, whenever "haunted" stores have been closed, not a sin-



THE PORTICO outside the Naval Training Center San Diego commissary, shown here in 1995. The store was the scene of a frequently reported friendly haunting. DeCA photo: John Ryan

gle spirit is known to have moved into the replacement store; every specter seems to have remained with their original structure. This indicates that the ghostly events were probably not caused by pranksters, who likely would have continued their activities at the new store location.

The most famous commissary ghost often appeared in broad daylight to workers and customers at the Naval Training Center San Diego commissary. The store was in an old building that had once been a library and dormitory, but the ghost was of recent origin, and was supposedly recognizable as a former commissary employee. It seemed he was trying to help in the produce section, as if he still worked there. One witness didn't think anything of it until he noticed the man's feet weren't touching the floor. When the witness realized this, he felt the hair on the back of his neck stand up, and the apparition vanished.

Another spirit shared the daily routine at Fort Shafter, Hawaii. The employees called him "George," and believed him to be a soldier from the 1940s. Employees, contractors, and even delivery truck drivers reported seeing him or feeling his presence. The building had been built in 1917 and had served for years as a warehouse, but it may have been a temporary morgue following the Japanese attack of December 7, 1941—which might explain why George was there.

Late at night in the old Moody Air Force Base store in Georgia, rolls of paper towels used to come off the shelves and roll down the aisle—

all the way down the aisle—by themselves. Several employees glimpsed a man in a brown uniform, walking past the aisles or going to the warehouse, but when they searched they could never find him. The building's history is hazy, but since the base used to belong to the Army Air Forces, the uniform might date from the years between 1942 and 1947.

At the old Pearl Harbor store, contractors and employees alike reported strange events all over the store. For example, the zone manager once saw some blinds inexplicably closing themselves. Later, he saw movement out of the corner of his eye and heard a door open and shut, but, upon immediate investigation, found no one there.

On one occasion a commissary officer was washing his hands in the men's room when he heard the door open. "I didn't turn to see who it was, but I knew someone had entered. I heard them enter the toilet stall and lock the door." Glancing down as he left, he realized there were no feet at the bottom of the stall. "I asked if anyone was there and got no answer. To my surprise, the stall door was shut and locked, from the inside, and no one was in the stall."

On another night, he was again alone when he went to read the temperature gauges on two big storage freezers. As he approached, "Both freezer doors flew open at the same time! No one was in the freezers, and no one else was in the store; it was closed for the holidays. I quickly did my temperature checks and left!" Believing the ghost was that of a former commissary employee, the store workers got the store blessed by a local pastor, to try to give the wandering spirit some peace.

Hauntings do not always mean "apparitions." The old store at Naval Air Station Meridian, Mississippi, had an annoying occupant that no one ever saw. Employees thought it was the ghost of an ex-employee. If so, this gentleman, who had been the model of decorum while alive, apparently shed some of his inhibitions after his passing! He harassed the female employees, sometimes by pinching. The first woman that attracted his attention spoke to him angrily: "Quit rubbing my neck," she'd say, startling everyone else in the room. Soon they, too, started getting harassed. The men were never bothered, so the supervisor never believed a word of it; even if he had, he could hardly have done anything about it. Fortunately, following the move to the new store, Meridian's female employees seem to have escaped their secret admirer.

A haunting can be a bizarre string of events that seem more than mere coincidence. In 2000, employees and customers of Mallonee Village on Fort Bragg, North Carolina, felt that some entity or spirit was intentionally causing trouble and damage. Such events fit the classic definition of a poltergeist, a rambunctious spirit who won't let the inhabitants of a building rest until something specific is done: A certain picture has to be rehung, a room needs to be repainted in its former color, or something of that sort. At Mallonee, the spirit may simply have wanted the store to remain open, because most of the trouble occurred on the very last day of business.

No one ever saw anything in the new store at Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines, either. The building opened in 1984, but the problem stemmed from the building's location, not its age. Local lore said that several Japanese soldiers had been killed during World War II on the very spot that was occupied, forty years later, by the store's front end. Some employees, either through intuition or superstition, didn't want to have anything to do with that area. Several believed that malevolent, angry spirits inhabited the place. Others felt nothing at all, and to this day it's uncertain as to whether the story of the Japanese casualties was true or not. Mount Pinatubo's eruption (*see Chapter 10*) put an

end to all concerns anyone might have had about vengeful spirits; everyone had to flee the eruption or they would have joined whatever spirits there were, in short order.

Finally, at the Defense Distribution Center, New Cumberland, Pennsylvania, there was a commissary ghost the employees named Francis and Frances (since they didn't know its gender, the name worked for either). Never seen, it often made its presence known in annoying ways. Former store personnel assure us that while Francis/Frances "never hurt anyone," it was very annoying. It liked to rattle a lot of the heavy frozen turkeys in the freezer—all at once! It tossed loaves of bread from one aisle to the next, and actually dumped an entire shelf of bread onto the floor; store workers picked it up, but five minutes later the bread was on the floor again.

One night, while walking past a display, the night receiver picked a few items off the floor; returning minutes later, he found a dozen items back on the floor. "At that point I knew something was up," he says; "I was the only one in the building!" A few weeks later, again at night, things repeatedly were thrown off displays and shelves, and the only two employees in the store at the time found cans from one aisle had been dumped into a completely different aisle.

This cantankerous spirit may have been photographed. The accompanying photo (printed here upside down) was supposed to show a soft drink display, but twice the flash failed. In one of the resultant photos there was a smoky apparition, invisible to the naked eye. At the bottom of the photo (as shown here) are warehouse lights, blurred by camera motion. People see various things in the photo: Some see hands and faces, including a mouth and chin at the very top; others figure somebody was smoking nearby when the shot was taken, and the hands and faces are just as real, and just as fleeting, as those in cloud formations.

Whether you are skeptical, cynical, open-minded, or a believer, we leave the verdict to you. As an old television series used to say, these stories and this photo are submitted for your consideration. Just don't expect ghost stories to go away ... and don't expect people to be too enthused about working late, by themselves, in an old commissary building!



SMOKE OR SPIRIT? This upside-down photo seems to reveal a spirit or two. Believers say the photo needs to be upside down in order to better see the strange "hand reaching towards the camera," as well as the "chin and mouth" that now appear at the top center of the photo. Skeptics say the film was double-exposed, or someone was smoking and the flash didn't function correctly.

Photo courtesy DDRE/New Cumberland commissary



2005: KATRINA HITS GULF COAST. On August 29, Hurricane Katrina subjected the store at Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi, to a five-foot storm surge throughout the resale floor and warehouse. It caused structural damage to the building's support columns, and major damage to the roof. Most of the store's product was lost. However, on September 29, DeCA opened a temporary, 25,000-square-foot store on Keesler to support the thousands of patrons in the Biloxi-Gulfport area. The store was housed in the former community center building. **INSET PHOTO:** Some of the damage at the Keesler store's front entrance. *DeCA photos by Ed Jones, deputy director DeCA East* **RIGHT PHOTO:** DeCA and base officials cut the ribbon to open the temporary store. From left: Brig. Gen. William Lord, 81st Training Wing commander; Frank Sholedice, store director; Ed Jones, DeCA East deputy director (background); and Col. Bruce Bush, 81st Mission Support Group commander. The agency had opened a similar facility at nearby Naval Construction Battalion Center Gulfport on September 10. *Air Force photo: Kemberly Groue, 81st Training Wing public affairs*



South Dakota, Naval Submarine Base New London, Connecticut, and Naval Shipyard Portsmouth, New Hampshire/Maine, which had all been on the original closure list, would instead remain open.

The commission's recommendations were delivered to the president for approval and submission to Congress. Even if some bases with commissaries eventually do close, DeCA would determine if it could keep some of these bases' commissaries open, especially in areas where the demographics show a high concentration of active duty, National Guard, Reservists, and retirees. The services also had requested the establishment of several commissaries at entirely new locations in the next few years, which would expand the benefit to new geographical areas.

In August 2005 the BRAC commission approved the merger of the Midwest and Eastern regions with the Hopewell (Virginia) office, which cut DeCA costs and placed the Eastern Region offices in a secure on-post location. Security concerns in the post-9/11 era prompted DeCA to begin planning a headquarters addition that would enable all its off-post offices in the Fort Lee area to move onto the installation.

LEAN SIX SIGMA

Beyond any changes that BRAC would bring about, initiatives at DeCA aimed to streamline the organization and the way it did business. Beginning with discussions on strategic planning during Wiedemer's tenure, the organizational self-evaluation resulted in an in-depth examination of business processes. This, in turn, led to organizational reengineering, including headquarters and regional restructuring and realignment, the centralization of regional functions at DeCA Headquarters, and the initiation of the Lean Six Sigma (L6S) program.

DeCA saw its future as that of an agency aligned around key process owners and tasked to consolidate support functions, develop a corporate business approach, and use L6S and other management methods to improve key business processes. This approach gained DeCA

recognition from the Council for Excellence in Government as a finalist for an Acquisition in Government Award, representing Business Solutions in the Public Interest. The agency also received recognition for its improved financial performance.

In 2005, L6S became the agency's latest strategy to improve the benefit. The L6S teams focused upon facilities, equipment supply, resale and resale services, information technology systems, budget planning and accountability, and hiring, training, and retaining personnel. The program aimed to eliminate waste and speed up business processes (this was the Lean portion); and lower costs, boost customer satisfaction, and eliminate defects (the Six Sigma portion). Overall, it reduced service costs, improved service delivery time, and expanded capacity, without adding staff.

The agency adopted L6S in hopes of becoming leaner, quicker, and more efficient as it faced impending budget reductions and BRAC closures.

MOTHER NATURE'S FURY

Not every aspect of the commissary business can be controlled by mere humans. Mother Nature is always capable of upsetting any and all human plans. Every year, commissary service is disrupted somewhere on the globe by one natural disaster or another.

Although earthquakes have done their share of damage over the years, and a volcano forced the closure of three stores in 1991, most recent major or catastrophic damages to commissaries have involved typhoons or hurricanes. It seems not a year goes by without damage to the bases and housing on Guam. But it was the years 2003-2005 that were particularly bad for storms hitting the United States. In 2004 alone, four major named storms hit Florida, causing a terrible amount of destruction and suffering. Military bases, of course, were not immune to the storms, so commissaries throughout Florida were damaged.

But in sheer numbers of storms, 2005 eclipsed all previous records. For the first time, the people who name hurricanes and tropical storms ran through the entire

English alphabet and then began going through the Greek alphabet as well.

The worst of these 2005 storms was Hurricane Katrina, which struck the Gulf Coast on August 29, causing massive damage, breaking levees and triggering widespread flooding. New Orleans was paralyzed and much of Biloxi, Mississippi, was devastated. Although the store at Naval Support Activity New Orleans escaped major damage, it had to temporarily close because of the devastation surrounding it; not only were there very few customers remaining in the area, but the store's parking lot was needed for dual duty as both a helipad and an area for field kitchens.

The store at Naval Air Station Pensacola, Florida, received some damage to its roof, while the store at Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi, was completely devastated by flooding. The roof of the Naval Station Gulfport, Mississippi, store was destroyed, causing massive damage to the interior structure and products on the shelves. Nonetheless, within two weeks, DeCA personnel were able to open a temporary facility at Gulfport, and by September 29—exactly one month after Katrina had struck—a temporary facility opened at Keesler, and the New Orleans store was able to reopen. Ultimately, the Gulfport store would be repaired, but the Keesler store would have to be entirely rebuilt.

Remarkably, because of the capriciousness of the storm—like 1992's Hurricane Andrew, which lifted off portions of a commissary roof but left papers on a desk in the offices below undisturbed (*see pages 400-01*)—some of the products at these stores remained undamaged. Most, however, were unsalvageable and had to be destroyed.

As it had done in 1992 for the Homestead commissary that had been heavily damaged by Hurricane Andrew, DeCA mobilized a recovery team. Unlike 1992, however, when the uniformed personnel assigned to DeCA had made up the recovery teams, this time DeCA's teams consisted of civilian volunteers. They came from DeCA headquarters, DeCA East, and from several stores. They helped assess the damage and assisted in cleanup efforts. Of

2006: RAF LAKENHEATH, England. A customer searches for savings during DeCA's worldwide case lot sale at Lakenheath on May 27. Worldwide case lot sales events are held every May and September. The sales offer shoppers the chance to buy bulk quantities of their favorite products—everything from paper goods to canned goods to meat in some locations—at savings of up to 50 percent, or even more, depending on locality.

DeCA photo courtesy Lakenheath commissary



the three stores affected, Keesler was in the worst shape, by far; however, commissary operations at Gulfport became a priority when the installation commander decided to keep that base open. By mid-September, DeCA had opened a makeshift store to serve Gulfport while repairs continued on the main facility.

The ordeal wasn't over. Within a few weeks, Hurricane Rita plowed into Texas—forcing many people who, thanks to Katrina, were still living in temporary facilities in the Houston area—to flee once more. Then in October, after smashing Cozumel and the Yucatan peninsula in Mexico, Hurricane Wilma swept eastward across southern Florida, hitting the one section of the state that had been largely spared in recent years. In every case, commissary personnel in the area, whether or not their stores were damaged, did their best to assist the military and civilian communities. They were joined by DeCA personnel from all over the country, serving patrons in the finest tradition of the commissary services.

A 2007 SNAPSHOT

A snapshot of DeCA at the start of fiscal 2007 showed sales of over \$5 billion; the agency providing support for troops and staff at over thirty embassy locations, and bringing U.S. products through direct shipment to remote locations around the world; operational support to key facilities, such as the Guantanamo Bay NEXMART in Cuba; an aggressive facilities renovation and construction program using the customer-generated surcharge; and more than double the previous investment in renovation of facilities and new construction. Using the civilian grocery industry as a benchmark, the agency's operational costs compared very favorably; DeCA "throughput"* capacity was 18 percent greater than the typical private-sector supermarket.

Customer savings of more than 30 percent translated into \$2 billion yearly staying in the wallets and purses of DeCA patrons. Calculating total sales and savings, commissaries as of 2006 delivered a \$2 return on



2006, KEFLAVIK, Iceland. Store Worker Leader Heidar Thorhallsson was a "local national" who worked at the Keflavik commissary from 1993 until it closed in 2006. Jim Marino, former Keflavik store director—and currently holding the same position at Lajes in the Azores—says Thorhallsson was "always pleasant and customer-oriented."

DeCA photo: Jim Marino

investment (ROI) for every \$1 of appropriated funds spent. Using U.S. Department of Agriculture figures, DeCA calculated average grocery expenditures for a family of four equated to nearly \$3,000 per year savings with regular commissary shopping. Just as importantly, over one-third of military commissaries were in overseas locations where few U.S. commercial grocers operate. CONUS large-store sales were driving overall savings up and unit costs down. DeCA bought in large volume to get price breaks and lower prices from suppliers, which translated to both greater customer savings and to greater sales that generated additional surcharge funds.

A focus on becoming "results-driven" not only enabled DeCA to set record-high sales and savings totals, but to exceed industry standards for sales per square foot, sales per employee and checkout, average customer orders, and customer satisfaction. The Commissary Customer Service Survey score (CCSS) was 4.47 on a scale of 5. DeCA's score on the American Customer Satisfaction Survey Index rose to 76, exceeding the National Supermarket Industry Average of 74. And, thanks largely to the agency's focus on financial

accountability, DeCA received "unqualified" (that is, accepted as accurate, without reservation) audit opinions for five consecutive years, starting in 2003. DeCA also entered into a recovery audit services contract to make sure payments to industry were on time and correct.

Thus, as the agency entered 2008, DeCA was doing better than ever, and looking forward to the future. In its first fifteen years of existence, DeCA had repeatedly been recognized as a leader in DoD for transformation and reform. A trailblazer in the Performance Based Organization (PBO) initiative and the Presidential Quality Awards, it had received multiple awards for reengineering and streamlining processes. It was a leader in activity-based management concepts and principles, and DeCA leadership was confident the agency would continue to be a leader and trailblazer among government agencies and grocery chains.

CUSTOMERS IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

If there ever was a single type of commissary customer, there certainly isn't any more. The predilection of Americans for

*— The entire process of a sales item being "put through" the store: products brought to, displayed in, and sold from the store in a given period of time.

ELIGIBLE CUSTOMERS: The Reason the Benefit Exists

THE COMMISSARY benefit's original customers were Army officers, who were allowed to purchase goods from the subsistence department's commissary warehouses "at cost" as early as 1825, forty-two years before the dawn of the modern benefit. By 1841 the officers could shop for their families. Because enlisted men were not allowed to make purchases until July 1, 1867, that date is considered the "birthday of the modern benefit"—whereby soldiers of all ranks were allowed to purchase goods "at cost."

Since then, the patron list has grown and become complex. From the start, spouses were allowed to shop when their husbands were away on campaigns, and by the 1930s they were shopping at most locations whether or not their husbands were deployed elsewhere. Retired officers—men who had spent at least twenty years in uniform—were added to the "eligible" list in 1879, while enlisted retirees were granted shopping privileges by 1916. After the Navy and Marine Corps opened their first stores in 1910, members of each service were permitted to shop in commissaries run by any of the other services; all patrons paid the same prices at a given commissary, regardless of the service affiliation of the local base.

Today, the Armed Services Commissary Regulation—DoD regulation 1330.17-R, the direct descendant of the Armed Services Commissary Regulation of 1949—specifies all those who are legal commissary patrons. The list presented here is not complete; there are complexities that are too lengthy to detail here. Instead, the following describes some of the more interesting classes of authorized patrons. Anyone wanting a definitive, up-to-the-minute list should consult the latest version of the regulation.

As of December 2007, eligible patrons include:

- ✓ Uniformed personnel of the U.S. Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard, as well as commissioned officers of the Public Health Service, members of the National Guard and Reserves.
- ✓ Retired personnel of the above organizations.
- ✓ Spouses, unmarried former spouses, and other dependents of someone in the above organizations.
- ✓ Children of members of the above organizations who are under the age of 21 (under 23 if a full-time student), unmarried, and dependent for more than one-half of their support from their sponsoring service member.
- ✓ Surviving spouses who have not remarried, children, and dependents of any member of the above organizations who died while on active duty. Also, orphans of, or surviving dependent parents of, these deceased personnel, who previously had been granted commissary privileges.



2005: FORT PICKETT, Virginia. An Army sergeant wheels away his purchases during the case lot sale at Fort Pickett held in September. The event was the latest example of numerous similar efforts to bring the commissary to retired, Guard, Reserve, and active-duty personnel who live on or near a base that doesn't have a commissary of its own. DeCA photo: Bonnie Powell

- ✓ Veterans with honorable discharges who are entitled to 100 percent service-connected total disability.
- ✓ Members of the crews of vessels of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), formerly known as the

Environmental Science Services Administration; retired officers and crews of vessels, light keepers, and depot keepers of the former lighthouse service, and of the Coast and Geodetic Survey.

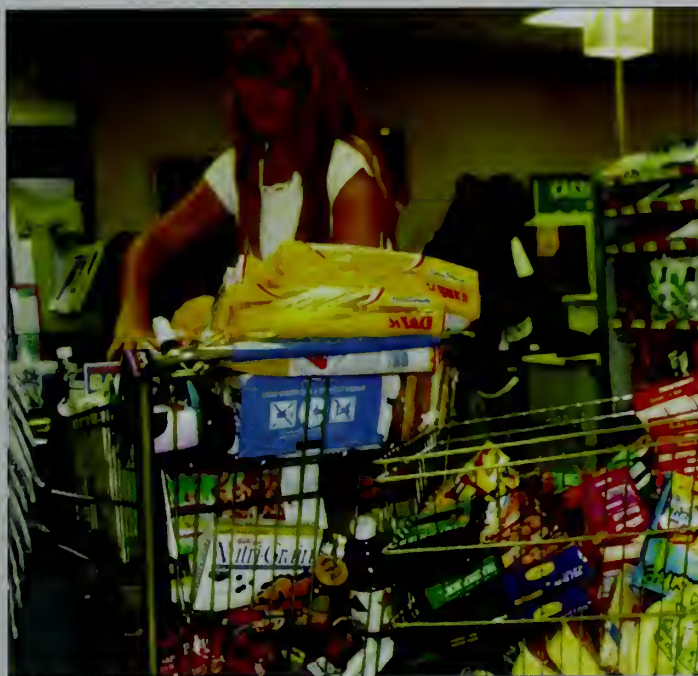
- ✓ Hospitalized veterans.
- ✓ All Medal of Honor recipients.
- ✓ Civilian employees of the U.S. government or the military services stationed overseas, and their dependents living with them.
- ✓ Civilian employees of the military services in the United States, living on a military installation, when it is deemed impractical for those civilians to shop elsewhere.
- ✓ American National Red Cross personnel assigned to the military services and living on military installations in the United States, or working with the military services overseas.
- ✓ Retired civilian employees of the Coast Guard.
- ✓ United Service Organization clubs and agencies in the United States, and individuals assigned overseas.
- ✓ Official organizations and resale activities of the U.S. military services.
- ✓ Non-DoD Government departments or agencies in overseas areas may be extended privileges.
- ✓ Non-DoD Government departments, agencies, or individuals in overseas areas, serving the U.S. military exclusively, may be extended privileges.
- ✓ DoD and other government employees stationed overseas.
- ✓ Designated officials who may purchase in bulk for government agencies or departments.
- ✓ Military members of foreign nations, on active duty with U.S. military services, under orders of the U.S. armed forces, or when assigned military attaché duties in the United States.

For years, proposals have come and gone suggesting that all commissary employees be allowed to shop in commissaries. But Congress and various military associations believe the benefit should continue to be earned only through service in uniform.



▲ **2001: WORLD WAR II VETERAN** George Wilson, who lost his left arm and leg just before the Battle of the Bulge, stands next to bagger Sumon Clay at the Defense Supply Center Richmond (Bellwood), Virginia, commissary. A remarkable man from a remarkable generation, he supplemented his retiree income by repairing watches—delicate, precise, and difficult work for anyone—but George did it with one hand.

DeCA photos: Pete Skirbunt



▲ **2002: Dahlgren, Virginia.** Petty Officer 3rd Class William Jackson takes time out for some quick shopping.



▲ **2000: FORT BRAGG NORTH, North Carolina.** This airman first class stationed at neighboring Pope Air Force Base patronized the Fort Bragg North store because of its large size and stock assortment.

◀ **2002: QUANTICO, Virginia.** This family member rolls in three shopping carts full of groceries during a visit to the commissary at Marine Corps Training Base Quantico.

individuality, as well as the proliferation of new products and advertising, prompts modern shoppers to expect a far larger variety of products in their commissary than ever before. They expect newly advertised products to be on the shelves shortly after their television debut. It's tough to anticipate what customers will like and what they won't, and because of limited space many commissaries have to compromise. Wellness and healthy are big "umbrella" categories that suit most shoppers and stores, but other approaches, such as the Adkins Diet or the South Beach Diet popular in 2004-2005, might, in the long run, simply turn out to be fads. Temporary by nature, fads are tough to accommodate on shelves already filled with all the other products that are longtime favorites.

Like all businesses, DeCA is constantly faced with the question, "What do our customers want?" DeCA leadership believes customer satisfaction depends heavily not only on prices, but upon the quality of meat and produce, store cleanliness, and customer service. The introduction of case-ready meat and packaged produce allows increased variety at small stores, enabling them to have offerings similar to larger stores. Lower labor costs were anticipated in both areas, as well. Nonetheless, in a nod to traditional customer service, DeCA continued to perform meat processing in its larger stores.

Another way of drawing customers to the stores was the rapid marketing of new products. DeCA was becoming an industry leader in that category, getting new products on the shelves faster, along with introductory prices and coupons. DeCA also intended to become an industry leader in technology, and on the supply side, with assistance from its distributors.

The ability to attract single soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines into the stores is of vital importance. This had traditionally been a difficult group to reach. Under DeCA, a concerted effort has been made to reach them through on-post television spots, information published in base newspapers, and by getting thousands of single service members to tour the stores and experience the benefit first-hand.

DeCA wanted to work with the Guard and Reserve to participate in the events they had for their people. The agency could put special packaging and pricing events together, pre-positioning orders wherever possible, and taking the product to Guard and Reserve customers at a base or armory on training weekends. DeCA saw it had an opportunity to reach new customers, with greater variety within categories than its private-sector counterparts, better perishables, cleaner stores, better customer service, supply-chain efficiency, and a willingness to maximize the use of technology.

A LANDMARK YEAR

The year 2007 marked the 140th anniversary of the establishment of at-cost sales commissaries being available to soldiers of all ranks. As DeCA passed that landmark date, its mission, values, vision, goals and objectives were more clearly defined than at any other time in the history of the benefit. The agency continued to focus on helping the armed services retain quality personnel by serving its customers well, providing a top-notch, premier benefit.

Customers were finding more than ever that their benefit was saving them a great deal of money, and the facilities in which they shopped were light-years removed from the old Quonset huts of the World War II era. The DeCA workforce also found itself in a unique position; it was more appreciated, and had more opportunities for career advancement, than at any other time in commissary history.

Workforce and customers alike owed their ever-improving outlook, as well as their ever-improving store facilities, to the many thousands of commissary employees, customers, and leaders who had preceded them since 1867. Those people had worked hard to establish, improve, protect, and strengthen the commissary benefit.

Now, 140 years after the stores' establishment—and 232 years since the establishment of the commissary department—the benefit is still going strong to benefit the men and women who sacrifice much to defend this nation.

"STORE OF THE FUTURE"

became the "store of today" on April 20, 2007, as DeCA opened the U.S. military's largest commissary at Naval Base San Diego, California. The new store is more than 126,000 square feet in size with expanded perimeter departments, and separate entrances for quick Grab-N-Go shopping and full-store shoppers. The old San Diego store had been built in 1988 and renovated in 1994. The new store has 21 full-service registers and 8 self-checkouts.

DeCA photo: Kevin L. Robinson





TOBACCO IN AMERICA and in the Commissaries

OVER THE LAST five hundred years, the practice of smoking tobacco has been many things: a political or religious ritual, a flouting of societal conventions, a badge of manhood, a facade of hardness, a statement of female emancipation, a rite of passage, and a pleasurable pastime.

The custom is now generally frowned upon as a health hazard (even by many smokers who would quit, if they could), but it has been practiced by America's military since the days of the colonial militia. Of course, it dates back much farther than that; when Columbus arrived in the West Indies in 1492, he saw natives smoking tobacco through a tube called a *Tobago*, from which the plant later derived its name. After the Spanish brought it home in quantity in 1556, the practice of smoking tobacco (with pipes rather than tubes) spread quickly. French diplomat Jean Nicot took it to France in 1557, and his name gave the plant its scientific moniker, *Nicotiana tabacum*, as well as the name of its principal active ingredient, nicotine. It soon spread throughout Europe, Russia, Turkey, and the West African coast.

By 1615, the English colonists of Jamestown discovered the commercial value of Virginia tobacco. It saved Jamestown from financial ruin and later became Virginia's primary export, backing the colony's currency. A song of the day praised, "Tobacco is like love. ... Love makes a man sail 'cross the sea; so doth tobacco."

By the time of the Civil War, sutlers sold great quantities of it, and Confederate soldiers often had a good supply of it, which they traded to their Yankee counterparts for coffee or sugar. In 1879, Congress established a 10-percent charge on all commissary items—except tobacco—to help pay spoilage and transport costs. Considering modern efforts to discourage the use of tobacco, it's noteworthy that 127 years ago it was the only sales item exempted from the surcharge. In those days, tobacco was regarded as a health-giving necessity.

By the late nineteenth century, pipe smoking was popular among all classes, and affluent men indulged in after-dinner port, sherry, and cigars. Cigarettes, which by 1881 were being churned out by machines, were deemed rough-edged and unacceptable in polite society. Snuff had already lost its popularity, and chewing tobacco was considered to be as lowbrow as the spittoons the practice required. But whatever form tobacco took, society often frowned upon ladies who smoked. That perception shifted after



1949: ADS WITH CELEBRITY endorsements, such as this one of Bob Hope that appeared in *The Quartermaster Review* in June, were common in military magazines in the 1930s and '40s, giving the product an aura of respectability and healthfulness.

World War I as society's attitudes toward smoking changed.

Tobacco's popularity spread during the war, when the United States provided it to the Allies. Many, if not most, American servicemen overseas used tobacco in some form. Stationary and mobile commissaries sold large quantities of it, but the men sometimes had difficulty obtaining it until President Woodrow Wilson authorized a tobacco ration for American soldiers overseas in May 1918 (see page 114). The War Department began to furnish it with the food rations to the men in the trenches: 0.4

ounces smoking (pipe) tobacco, 0.4 ounces chewing tobacco, or four cigarettes per man, per day. Men receiving pipe tobacco also received ten cigarette papers for "rolling their own." The Quartermaster General's 1918 report says, "This ration was authorized because it was deemed almost a *necessity* for the welfare of the men serving there [overseas]." [Emphasis added]

Stuck in World War I's cold, wet trenches that were infested with



1918: AMERICAN SOLDIERS unloading candles and tobacco in France. Although tobacco was extremely popular during the American Civil War, it wasn't until World War I that President Woodrow Wilson gave the product his authorization for use in official rations. *National Archives*

bluebottle flies and rats, surrounded by barbed wire and blasted earth, many soldiers found solace in nicotine. Cigarettes became popular because they were easy to carry and use, while pipes needed repeated repacking and relighting. Smoking was prohibited in the trenches at night, yet tobacco's appeal was such that men risked death and courts-martial to indulge their habit after dark. The flash of a match could draw enemy fire, so it was safer to light a cigarette once than a pipe a half-dozen times.

After the war, the men brought the habit back home. They in turn introduced it to their girlfriends, who were already becoming liberated from many old norms.

Tobacco remained popular among the troops. In 1922 the subsistence sales store at Fort Monroe, Virginia, carried pipes, 15 types of cigarettes and 26 brands of cigars, along with chewing and smoking tobacco, and the pipes with which to smoke it. In 1927, San Diego Naval Station's commissary stocked 12 types and sizes of cigarettes, 35 cigars, 16 pipes, pipe cleaners, 4 chewing tobaccos, and 13 tobaccos for pipes or "roll-your-own" cigarettes. Ten years later, cigarettes were so popular that the commissary at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, kept them under lock and key—a policy that became widespread as time passed.

As with other products, advertisements for cigarettes targeted customers by gender, age, and occupation. Ads that appealed to the military by showing the cigarette as something that was manly turned up regularly in publications aimed at members of the armed forces. They featured movie-star endorsements and photos of servicemen praising their favorite brands.

By World War II, cigarettes were sold at commissaries, exchanges and canteens, and were included in almost all ration packs. The classic example was the Parachute Emergency Ration, an individual survival packet in a seamless metal can. It included candy, a cheese-and-cracker bar, bouillon cubes, sugar, chewing gum, and cigarettes, all the "necessities" airborne troops needed to survive if separated from their units. Ration cigarettes proved popular even among men who did not smoke, since they were welcome as gifts or as items for barter.

During and after World War II, Hollywood made the cigarette an indispensable prop. A lot could be told about a movie character by the way he or she smoked: tough, suave, and in charge if a man; worldly, elegant, and independent if a woman. Following Hollywood's lead, smokers began lighting up everywhere: taverns, restaurants, homes, and high-school restrooms.

Smokers developed fierce brand loyalty, so servicemen angrily objected to unpopular brands of cigarettes in the rations. After the war and through the 1950s, millions smoked, either out of habit or because they felt they were more attractive with a cigarette in their hand. No one with any credibility had yet told them it was dangerous. "Smoker's cough" was a common side effect, but by that point, millions were smoking and wouldn't quit or couldn't quit, even if they wanted to.

In the 1960s, the decision on whether or not to sell cigarettes in Marine Corps commissaries was left to the local commander. Army and



1958: THIS VIEW OF THE FRONT END at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas, shows cartons of cigarettes prominently displayed near the checkouts. In later years, cigarettes became expensive enough that they were targets of shoplifters, and efforts were made to secure them where they were not so easily accessible. Most states limited purchases—usually to two cartons—in an attempt to control the purchase of tax-free cigarettes. *DeCA historical file*

Air Force commissaries continued selling them, and Navy exchanges stocked them, but Navy commissaries did not. Then, cigarettes became a public health issue in 1964, when the surgeon general's warning was first printed on cigarette packs. In 1973, the Marine Corps banned the sale of tobacco in its commissaries. By the mid-1980s, though cigarettes remained in most commissaries and exchanges, the armed forces initiated efforts to discourage smoking. Not only was the health of the smoker thought to be at risk, but studies showed that second-hand smoke was harmful, too. Consequently, the government and the armed services began to enforce no-smoking rules among uniformed and civilian personnel who worked in government buildings.

In the 1990s, critics wondered why DeCA continued to sell tobacco when the armed forces were discouraging its use. Agency policy on the subject was simple: DeCA served at the behest of the Department of Defense and the Congress. As long as it remained a legal product, customers demanded it, and Congress authorized its sale, DeCA would stock and sell tobacco. Army Maj. Gen. Richard E. Beale Jr., DeCA director during the tobacco controversy of 1995-96, noted that while he personally disapproved of smoking, his experience was that alcohol was a far more disruptive and worrisome product. He felt alcohol caused more trouble among men under his command (and their families) than smoking ever could.

On November 1, 1996, the Department of Defense transferred all on-base cigarette sales to the exchanges. DeCA continued selling cigarettes on consignment for the exchanges and received a small percentage as a cost recovery fee. This compromise action raised prices on cigarettes sold in the commissaries by 20 to 30 percent and eliminated tax-supported commissary sales of tobacco. Customers disliked the higher prices, but the policy kept the product in the commissary, and prices were still lower than could be found off post. However, commissary sales totals dropped as a result, and that in turn affected the surcharge fund.

Debate continues over whether tobacco should be sold on military installations. The argument will probably go on as long as people smoke.

CHRONOLOGY of KEY EVENTS

2000 - 2007

2000

JAN. 1-3, 2000

NO Y2K PROBLEMS on New Year's Day. DeCA experienced none of the problems that, it was feared, might result from computers not recognizing dates beyond December 31, 1999. For DeCA, that could have meant problems with anything from the stores' cash registers to personal computers in support offices.

MARCH 22, 2000

BECAUSE OF the continuing "Mad Cow Disease" (Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy, or BSE) scare in the United Kingdom, DeCA ordered its European commissaries to immediately stop the sale of any European beef products, and British products in particular. This was largely due to a decision by the Army's Surgeon General to enforce a U.S. Department of Agriculture regulation that would potentially influence operations at commissaries as well as on-base restaurants, shopettes, and fast-food establishments. (See entry for Jan. 24, 2001. *Stars & Stripes*, 22 Mar 2000, p. 1)

APRIL 28, 2000

DURING THE DeCA 2000 conference in Reno, Nevada, DeCA Director Maj. Gen. Robert J. Courter Jr. announced his proposed Best Value Item and Scholarships for Military Children programs, and encouraged industry support.

OCT. 12, 2000

International Terrorism: Seventeen sailors were killed and thirty-nine wounded when suicide bombers rammed an explosive-laden boat into the **USS Cole** in Aden harbor, Yemen. The attack was later linked to terrorist leader Osama bin Laden and his Al-Qaeda network.

OCT. 20, 2000

CONGRESS AMENDED Section 2685 of Title 10, United States Code, concerning the uses of the commissary surcharge. The amendments specifically named the uses to which the surcharge could be put, including "to acquire (including acquisition by lease), construct, convert, expand, improve, repair, maintain, and equip the physical infrastructure of commissary stores and central product processing facilities of the defense commissary system," as well as costs for environmental evaluation, "surveys, administration, overhead, planning, and design." These amendments took effect on October 1, 2001.



2000: WHIDBEY ISLAND, Washington. Greg and Jennifer Smith, with daughter Madeline, on a family trip to the commissary to stock up on milk and a few other necessities. DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt

2001

JAN. 24-29, 2001

World Events: *USA Today* ran articles on the "Mad Cow" problem, and the fear that it would spread to the United States. Having first turned up in the United Kingdom, the disease was now being found in mainland Europe. On January 24, twelve hundred cattle in Texas were quarantined because of the possibility they had been given feed of the type believed to be responsible for spreading the disease. (*USA Today*, 24-29 Jan 2001)

JAN. 31, 2001

World Events: CNN announced the twelve hundred cattle quarantined in Texas were declared free of "Mad Cow" disease.

FEB. 28, 2001

AN EARTHQUAKE measuring 6.8 on the

Richter scale, centered thirty-three miles under Olympia, Washington, rocked the Puget Sound area, causing minor damage to six area commissaries.

MARCH 29, 2001

CONGRESSMAN Norman P. Sisisky, (D-Virginia) a long-time friend of the commissaries, passed away in Richmond.

MAY 2001

DeCA no longer required customers to put their Social Security numbers on checks when paying for groceries. The agency took the action in order to allay customer concerns about fraud, identity theft, violations of personal privacy, or personal financial loss. The agency also was modifying its cash register system to stop printing Social Security numbers on the back of checks. (DeCA News Release 17-01, 21 Mar 2001)



Norman P. Sisisky

MAY 22, 2001

WILLIAM G. "BILL" Mackrain, a long-time DeCA and AFCEMS region director, passed away.

MAY 29-
JUNE 8, 2001

AN INVESTIGATION into the causes of a **Legionnaires' Disease** scare at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, centered on the meat and produce preparation rooms in the commissary. Ultimately the scare proved to be unfounded.

JUNE 1, 2001

ROBERT D. TATE, a member of the Senior Executive Service and director of the European Region, retired. Tate had spent fifty-one years in the grocery business, including more than twenty-five with AFCEMS and DeCA.



Robert D. Tate

JUNE 7, 2001

DeCA **PRESENTED** the first awards under the Scholarships for Military Children program. The program, administered by the Fisher House Foundation and financed by

JULY 26, 2001

donations from the grocery industry, awarded 391 scholarships, with at least one \$1,500 scholarship being presented at each store. (DeCA news release 26-01, 5 Jun 2001)

AUG. 29, 2001

THE HOUSE Armed Services Committee's Special Oversight Panel announced it would not allow the Defense Department to run a proposed pilot program to contract out certain Army and Marine Corps commissaries.

SEPT. 7-8, 2001

DeCA **DEDICATED** the Sisisky Wing of its headquarters building at Fort Lee, Virginia. It was named for the late Virginia **Congressman** Norman Sisisky, who had been instrumental in bringing DeCA to Fort Lee.

SEPT. 11, 2001

DECA HELD its first worldwide case lot sale. This sale marked the first time that the marketing business unit had arranged with industry to offer several hundred items from which all stores could offer case lot savings exceeding what's ordinarily found inside the store—during the same weekend.

International Terrorism: Nineteen terrorists linked to **Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda** terrorist organization hijacked four commercial airliners and used them to attack the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. An intended attack upon the White House or Capitol was foiled by one plane's passengers, who gave their lives trying to wrest control of the aircraft from the terrorists.

Nearly three thousand people had been killed. One of the members of the DeCA Retiree



2001: WORLDWIDE CASE LOT SALE. Shoppers at Travis Air Force Base, California, weave through a maze of product during DeCA's first worldwide case lot sale in September 2001. The sale resulted in \$8.9 million in sales and more than 744,000 cases sold. DeCA photo courtesy of the Travis commissary



2001: 'GIVING BACK.' Kitty Jolley-Grant (left), representing DeCA's marketing business unit (MBU), delivers refreshments to members of the Virginia Army National Guard while they guard the gates at Fort Lee. The soldiers enjoyed hot coffee, orange juice, candy canes, and a variety of pastries and fresh fruit on December 19. MBU personnel donated money for the food as part of their contribution to the agency's year-long tenth anniversary observance, "Giving to America." Gate guards have performed increased security duties at all installations since the terrorist attacks of September 11. DeCA photo: Kevin L. Robinson

SEPT. 18, 2001

International Terrorism: Beginning of an anthrax scare that lasted several weeks. Letters containing anthrax bacteria were mailed to several news media offices and two U.S. senators, killing five people. The crime remains unsolved.

SEPT. 19, 2001

BY NOW, all 283 commissaries had reopened, and all had added security measures.

OCT. 1, 2001

THE SURCHARGE revitalization approved on October 20, 2000, went into effect.

OCT. 1, 2001

DeCA OBSERVED its tenth anniversary with a yearlong initiative, "Giving to America," encouraging employees to donate time or money to base and community programs.

OCT. 1, 2001

REGION reorganization moved twelve stores from the Eastern to the Midwest Region.

OCT. 7, 2001

U.S. Military History: Operation Enduring Freedom, the military response to the September 11 terrorist attacks, began with U.S. and British air

strikes against the pro-Bin Laden Taliban regime in Afghanistan. Eventually, a military coalition of twenty-one nations would deploy 16,000 troops to Operation Enduring Freedom. The U.S. would deploy 9,000 troops to Afghanistan and another 1,000 to Uzbekistan for logistical support.

OCT. 15-16, 2001

THE COMMISSARY at Patrick Air Force Base, Florida, was closed and locked down for twenty-four hours while an unknown white powder found around a food crate was checked by authorities. The commissary reopened the next day when a Tampa laboratory found the powder was harmless.

OCT. 18-20, 2001

THE BABENHAUSEN, Germany, commissary, which was temporarily closed on October 18 due to the discovery of a suspicious white powdery substance, reopened two days later. A

TEN YEARS LATER:

After the terrorist attacks of September 11, DeCA's tenth anniversary was quietly observed. Instead of fanfare, cakes, and a party atmosphere, "Giving to America" became the agency's theme for the year. Employees were encouraged to give of themselves through charities, by participating in food, toy, and blood drives, by volunteering their time to help others in their community, and by assisting military family organizations with time or donations.

DeCA graphic art: Anne Fenessy

Celebrate
with us
and...

Giving To America

10th
ANNIVERSARY



2001: GRAND OPENING. John McGowan (center), Eastern Region director, prepares to cut the ribbon at the grand opening of the Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico, commissary on November 13. Joining McGowan (from left) are Col. John W. Peska, garrison commander; Grace McCann, zone manager of Zone 40; Maj. Gen. Alfred A. Valenzuela, commanding general, U.S. Army South; and Joseph A. Simmons, store director. DeCA photo courtesy of Fort Buchanan commissary

German laboratory tested the substance and found it was neither hazardous nor infectious. (DeCA European Region news release 52 102201, 22 Oct 2001)

OCT. 19, 2001

GUARD AND RESERVE members ordered to more than thirty days active duty would be issued active duty ID cards. They and their family members would have **unlimited commissary privileges**. Members ordered to active duty or to annual training for less than thirty days also were authorized unlimited commissary privileges during the inclusive dates of their duty. (www.deca.gov; armedforcesnews@fed-week.com; SparkLIST.com)

OCT. 31, 2001

RETIRED Air Force Maj. Gen. Robert F. Swarts, former commander of AFCOMS and AAFES, passed away. He had attended the opening of the Sisisky Wing on August 29. At the time, battling cancer and confined to a wheelchair, he had been as sharp-minded and spirited as ever.

2002

JANUARY 2002

DeCA **BEGAN** deploying **computer-assisted ordering**. The system gave selected commissaries the ability to reorder items that arrived at the store as needed, based on sales and distribution schedules. The "just-in-time" process was designed to eliminate the need to maintain stocks of products in commissary warehouses. (*Vision* magazine, summer 2002 issue, pp. 17-21)

JAN. 3, 2002

ROY C. Speight, a member of the Senior Executive Service and director of the Western/Pacific Region, retired. Speight had spent thirty-four years with military commissaries.



Roy C. Speight

JAN. 15, 2002

MAGAZINES began being sold in the commissaries once again—43 titles in the U.S., 39 titles overseas. By March, they were in every store. The commissaries were stocking them on their own, without having them supplied through exchange channels. (DeCA news release 04-02, 15 Jan 2002)

JAN. 29, 2002

DeCA's **LEGISLATIVE** Liaison Office in the Pentagon was renamed the DeCA Washington Office.

FEB. 7, 2002

BONNIE A. Kanitz, deputy director for DeCA's Eastern Region in Virginia Beach, Virginia, was appointed to the Senior Executive Service (SES) as director of DeCA's Midwest Region, headquartered at Kelly Air Force Base, Texas. She was the first female SES from the commissaries.



Bonnie A. Kanitz

MARCH 12, 2002

AT A HEARING of the House Armed Services Special Oversight Panel, Morale, Welfare, and Recreation, **Chairman Rep. Roscoe Bartlett** (R-Maryland) said privatization initiatives, including those centering on commissaries, had "largely receded." DeCA's director, **Maj. Gen. Robert J. Courter Jr.** told the panel that the benefit was stronger than ever, customer savings were at an all-time high, and family readiness was "what it's all about." The panel was not entirely receptive, however; one witness warned that retirees opposed commissary closures and regarded them as the erosion of retiree benefits.



Rick S. Page

MAY 2002

RICHARD S. "Rick" PAGE was appointed to the Senior Executive Service as Western/Pacific Region dir-



2002: AUTOMATED ORDERING.

Greg McGruder, a member of the headquarters core project team, scans a product into computer-assisted ordering at the Naval Air Station Oceana, Virginia, commissary. DeCA began installing CAO, the automated product ordering system, in its medium- and large-sized stores in January. McGruder was one of several CAO deployment team leaders responsible for traveling to selected stores to help those stores transition to the new system. Computer-assisted ordering was designed to reduce warehouse inventories by automatically programming deliveries. It allowed commissaries to maintain product on their shelves whenever customers shopped. DeCA photo: Kevin L. Robinson



ector. Page had served as acting director since January 2002 upon the retirement of the previous region director, Roy Speight.

MAY 2002

THE FIRST Commissary Awareness Month was built upon the success of the first Commissary Awareness Campaign. The campaign was an outreach project aimed at making single service members aware of their benefit. Throughout the month of May, single military shoppers were treated to commissary tours, shopping sprees, prizes, and competitive events (such as grocery cart races). (DeCA news release 64A-02, 3 Oct 2002; *Vision*, winter 2002, pp. 54-55)

JUNE 21, 2002

MAJ. GEN. Robert J. Courter Jr. retired after almost thirty-four years in the Air Force. He had served as DeCA's director for two-and-a-half years.

JULY 3, 2002

JOHN F. McGowan, Eastern Region director, retired after forty years of federal service.

JULY 9, 2002

DeCA SUBMITTED a justification to DoD for its continued existence as a DoD agency. Patrick Nixon, DeCA's CEO and acting director, briefed members of DoD's Senior Executive Council on

AUG. 12, 2002

the agency's core competencies that supported DoD's warfighting mission. Nixon secured the continuing viability of the agency with this presentation.

THE AGENCY'S new director, Air Force Maj. Gen. Michael Wiedemer, arrived at headquarters. He had been the director of requirements at the Air Force Materiel Command headquarters, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio.

SEPT. 20, 2002

DeCA ANNOUNCED that the Army's "Soldier of the Year" and "NCO of the Year" would receive five-minute commissary shopping sprees courtesy of the American Logistics Association's Commissary Awareness Team. This effort helped publicize the benefit among single enlisted military. (DeCA news release 61-02, 20 Sep 2002)

SEPT. 21-22, 2002

THE SECOND "World's Biggest Case Lot Sale" took place at commissaries around the world. It would become an annual event. (DeCA news release 52-02, 12 Aug 2002)

SEPT. 25, 2002

DeCA ANNOUNCED that commissary gift certificates would be available for purchase through the *commissaries.com* Web site. Anyone could purchase them, but only authorized patrons

could use them. This initiative became known as "Give the Gift of Groceries." (DeCA news release 63-02, 25 Sep 2002)

NOVEMBER 2002

SCOTT E. Simpson was appointed to the Senior Executive Service (SES) as director of the Eastern Region. Simpson had served as acting director of the region since the retirement of **John F. McGowan** in July 2002.



Scott E. Simpson

DEC. 2, 2002

THE DEPARTMENT of Defense comptroller called for a **one-year freeze on commissary construction** until the latest base realignment and closure (BRAC) cuts were determined. However, the comptroller wanted to take \$109 million in surcharge money and spend it elsewhere. **David Chu**, undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, and **Rep. Roscoe Bartlett** (R-Maryland), chairman of the House Armed Services Committee's Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Panel, successfully opposed this unprecedented use of the surcharge. (*Navy Times*, 2 Dec 2002, p. 16)

DEC. 8, 2002

TYPHOON PONGSONA hit Guam and caused \$591,000 in damage to stores at Andersen Air Base and the Guam Naval Base on the Orote Peninsula. The Guam CDC suffered another \$109,000 in damage. A number of employees lost their homes or sustained major damage to their property. The island suffered \$73 million in damage with more than three thousand homes destroyed and thousands of people left homeless.

DEC. 10, 2002

SELECTED commissaries opened deployment centers at the front of the store with a wide assortment of items for "care packages" that family and friends could send to troops deployed

DEC. 31, 2002

overseas. The centers offered nonperishable food items, sport drinks, batteries, and health and personal-care items.

DeCA WAS noted as one of four DoD agencies to achieve certification of its financial records. After a three-year evaluation, the agency received an "unqualified" opinion from its auditors, meaning its balance sheet accurately reflected its financial status, without question.

2003

FEB. 1, 2003

U.S. History: Space Shuttle *Columbia* was destroyed upon reentry into the Earth's atmosphere, killing all seven crew members.

MARCH 13, 2003

DeCA INTRODUCED new procedures for dishonored checks. Customer checks not honored by their banks would not be returned to the customer immediately, but would be sent back to the customer's bank. Planners felt by the time the turnaround occurred, most customers would have received a paycheck to cover the check. Those that didn't, however, would face double service charges from their banks, a fact with which some planners were uncomfortable. (DeCA news release 22-03)

MARCH 19, 2003

U.S. Military History: Operation Iraqi Freedom began. Following land and air bombardments, U.S., British, and other coalition ground troops deployed inside Iraq to stop suspected production of weapons of mass destruction and to enforce seventeen U.N. resolutions. Eventually, forty-nine nations would join the coalition. The U.S. would initially deploy more than 130,000 soldiers to Iraq for the operation

APRIL 15, 2003

OPERATION TOUCH of Home supplied large grocery orders from AAFES and Navy ships' stores destined for U.S. troops in the Middle East. The shipments were supported by



2003: 'RAVING FANS.'

Young Marines leave the commissary at Naval Submarine Base Bangor, Washington, with bags of giveaways donated by vendors and information on how to save money by shopping there. At far left is the store director, David Peters. Today this store is officially known as Naval Base Kitsap, Bangor commissary. Photo courtesy of Bangor commissary

the European Region's central distribution centers. (DeCA news releases, 28-03 and 28A-03, 15 Apr 2003)

APRIL 17, 2003

DeCA RECEIVED approval from the office of the undersecretary of defense to plan new commissaries at Marine Corps Support Activity Richards-Gebaur, Missouri, and Naval Air Station/Joint Reserve Base Willow Grove, Pennsylvania.

APRIL 29, 2003

"THE GIFT of Groceries" commissary gift certificates surpassed the \$1 million mark. As of this date, some 35,843 gift certificates had been issued at a value of \$1,009,430.

MAY 2003

COMMISSARIES IN Germany opened their doors to a new patron base, when twenty-five hundred German soldiers were granted limited shopping privileges. The Germans were performing guard duty on sixty American installations across the country, replacing U.S. service members deployed in Iraq. (*Vision*, summer 2003, p. 35)

JUNE 24, 2003

MILITARY RETAIL leaders from DeCA and all the exchange organizations, including the Coast Guard Exchange Service, and the Veterans' Canteen Service, met for a partnering session at Arnold Air Force Base, Tennessee. The major topic of discussion was how to strengthen the retail services. (DeCA news release 38-03, 9 May 2003)

JULY 23, 2003

THE ANNUAL customer satisfaction survey gave DeCA a score of 4.42 out of 5.00. (DeCA news release 45-03, 24 Jun 2003)

JULY 24, 2003

COLIN R. McMILLAN, former assistant secretary of defense for production and logistics, and formerly the first DoD supervisor of DeCA, died at his ranch in southern New Mexico. He was 67.

JULY 24, 2003

THE NEW expanded patron council, now numbering twenty-two members (up from eleven), met at DeCA headquarters. It represented retirees, active duty, spouses, National Guard, Reserves, Coast Guard, and military associations.

AUG. 14, 2003

SEVERAL EASTERN Region commissaries persevered through an electrical power outage of the northeastern United States from New York to Ohio. The event was the worst electrical power outage in North American history. Damages at the commissaries were held to a minimum. Most of the affected stores had power thanks to their installations supplying them with emergency generators; others had their own backup generators.

AUG. 29, 2003

A MEMO from the office of the principal deputy undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, to the secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force, addressed the status of 36 commissaries, 31 of which had not met the criteria for continuing commissary operations. Of these commissaries, Fort Monroe had already closed and Bad Aibling remained open, though its installation had closed. The Defense Department approved the closure of that store, as well as eight more (seven of them overseas) during Fiscal 2004. DoD also directed that plans be submitted to close 6 more in the same time frame, bringing the proposed total of fiscal



2003: YONGSAN, South Korea. The CDC crew comes outside for a group photograph on a beautiful summer day in South Korea.

DeCA photo: Gary Warrix



2003: WÜRZBURG, Germany. Flags of the fifty United States fly above the entrance of the store built in 1989, with 16,331 square feet of sales space. The store featured a delicatessen and bakery. By 2001 it had added Home Meal Replacements to its shelves and a Value Mart for bulk item sales.

DeCA photo courtesy Würzburg commissary

2004 closures to 15; another 19 were to come under quarterly scrutiny.

DoD later reconsidered these actions, but many of the stores named still eventually closed within the next few years. (*E&C News*, 15 Nov 2003, pp. 3, 11, 61-62; *E&C News*, 15 Dec 2003, pp. 3-4)



2003: BEFORE ISABEL. As Hurricane Isabel approached the East Coast, commissary employees at Langley Air Force Base, Virginia, covered checkout equipment. This precaution showed DeCA personnel were very conscious of recent history and the expensive damage hurricanes had wrought (see photo, pages 400-01). From left: Naomi Perez, acting assistant front end manager; Nancy Johnson, front end manager; Eunice Clements, cashier; and Eleanor Taft, teller.

DeCA photo: Norman Brown.

SEPT. 18-19, 2003 **HURRICANE ISABEL** wreaked havoc throughout North Carolina, Virginia, the District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. DeCA headquarters was closed due to a power outage, but critical computer systems remained online, so stores were still able to process orders and receive merchandise. At the height of the hurricane and its aftermath, several Eastern Region stores were forced to close, due to power outages or other weather-related problems. Most stores opened within a day or two of the storm. By the morning of September 24, all stores were operating except for the commissary at Bolling Air Force Base, Washington, D.C.

OCT. 20, 2003 **AFTER A** three-year delay, a plan to place floor graphics advertising in commissaries—a form of merchandising that had been used in the private sector for several years—was implemented. **Maj. Gen. Mike Wiedemer**, DeCA director, saw it as a practice of civilian industry that might be worth emulating. (DeCA news release 64-03, 16 Sep 2003)

NOV. 3, 2003 **BEEF SALES** were down in the public sector due to price increases and the “Mad Cow” scare. But they were up in the commissaries, where the additional inspections by veterinary personnel may have boosted customers’ confidence in the meat sold there. Commissary beef prices remained lower than those on the civilian market. (DeCA news release 73-03, 3 Nov 2003). When it was subsequently announced on December 24 that a cow in the state of Washington was discovered with the

2004: WHIDBEY ISLAND. The renovated store at Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, located in picturesque northwest Washington, features a delicatessen, bakery, fresh fish and seafood market, produce and dairy alcoves, sushi and hot rotisserie chicken, a seasonal plant section, and an in-store ATM machine. The renovated store increased total square footage from 39,408, to 67,612 square feet, sales area from 22,250 to 33,800 square feet, and from 12 to 16 registers. Its seventy-four employees (most of them working part time) served a customer base of about twenty-two thousand people. DeCA photo: Nancy O'Neill



disease, both the government and the commissaries remained optimistic. DeCA assured its customers that "all beef sold in commissaries is USDA-inspected," and was safe. (DeCA news releases 80-03, 24 Dec 2003, and 82-03, 30 Dec 2003)

NOV. 24, 2003

THANKS TO the 2004 National Defense Authorization Act, **Guard and Reserve commissary shopping became unlimited.** Before, it had been limited to twenty-four visits per year, which had discouraged convenience trips to the commissary to buy just a few items. (DeCA news releases 78-03, 16 Dec 2003, and 81-03, 31 Dec 2003)

DEC. 13, 2003

U.S. Military History: U.S. forces in Iraq captured Iraqi President Saddam Hussein hiding in a "spider hole" near his hometown of Tikrit.

DEC. 29, 2003

NAVY VICE Adm. Charles W. Moore Jr., succeeded Air Force Lt. Gen. Michael E. Zettler as chairman of the Commissary Operating Board.

2004

JANUARY 2004

RONALD K. Clark, director of the Midwest Region and member of the Senior Executive Service, retired after a forty-three-year commissary career.



Ronald K. Clark

JAN. 28, 2004

SCOTT Simpson, director of the Eastern Region, was

JAN. 30, 2004

selected to become DeCA's chief operating officer. Retired Air Force **Col. Ed Jones**, DeCA's director for resource management, was named the agency's new chief of support. (DeCA news release 03-04, 28 Jan 2004)



Ed Jones

FEBRUARY 2004

TO OBTAIN an integrated approach to the planning, direction, control, and execution of agency programs, DeCA established a systems engineering element at its headquarters at Fort Lee.

SELF-CHECKOUTS were installed in commissaries at Langley Air Force Base, Virginia, Fort Sam Houston, Texas, and McClellan, California. Scanner software upgrades allowing scanning of coupons were also installed at those locations. (DeCA news release 14-04, 16 Mar 2004)

MARCH 1, 2004

CECIL SAUNDERS was named DeCA's BRAC program manager.

MARCH 1, 2004

DeCA RECEIVED its second consecutive "unqualified" audit opinion, meaning that the agency's balance sheet accurately and truthfully reflected its financial status with no reservations. (DeCA news release 11-04, 1 Mar 2004)

MARCH 11, 2004

International Terrorism: Ten backpack bombs

exploded simultaneously aboard four trains at three stations in **Madrid, Spain**, killing 199 and wounding 1,450. The bombings were linked to the Al-Qaeda terrorist network.

APRIL 29, 2004

AN INDEPENDENT study recommended that DeCA not implement the practice of variable pricing. **Charles Abell**, principal deputy under secretary of defense, said he was satisfied that this was a thorough and impartial review that “provides sufficient evidence to rule out variable pricing as a method of operation for DeCA.” **Maj. Gen. Mike Wiedemer** said, “Variable pricing is not a feasible means to reduce taxpayers’ cost while maintaining a high savings rate.” (DeCA news release 24-04, 29 Apr 2004)



Michael Dowling

MAY 2004

MICHAEL DOWLING was appointed to the Senior Executive Service as director of DeCA Europe. Dowling



2004: GRAND FORKS grand opening, July 13. Patrick B. Nixon, who at this point was DeCA CEO, speaks at the grand opening of the \$10.3-million Grand Forks Air Force Base store in North Dakota. Nixon would become DeCA director in June 2006.

Air Force photo: Tech Sgt. Anthony Tyrell

JUNE 5, 2004

U.S. History: Former president Ronald Reagan, the nation’s fortieth head of state, died at his home in California from complications related to Alzheimer’s disease. He was ninety-three years old.

AUG. 1, 2004

DeCA ALTERED its region structure, merging the Midwest with the East and leaving three regions: DeCA West, DeCA East, and DeCA Europe. The San Antonio office became an area office for DeCA East. (DeCA news release 47-04, 2 Aug 2004)

SEPTEMBER 2004

A SERIES of four hurricanes damaged commissary facilities throughout the southeastern United States. In Florida, Hurricane Ivan did the most damage, striking the Florida panhandle and moving north. Several stores in the state were closed five days or more. Naval Station Pensacola reopened quickly thanks to personnel who volunteered to help clean and restock the store. Ivan’s effect on commissaries was widespread as power outages, downed phone lines, and impassable roads affected the ability of grocery distributors to supply forty commissaries in the Southeast with groceries even in locations not hit by the storm’s rain. This was a sobering reminder of why, during the Cold War, when any catastrophe or disaster seemed possible, many military commissaries had their own warehouses in which to keep extra stock.

**SEPTEMBER -
OCTOBER 2004**

DeCA’s CUSTOMER service survey, conducted at all commissaries worldwide during September and October, collected responses to fourteen questions from more than twenty-one thousand customers. Customers gave the highest overall marks ever—4.55 out of 5—and marks were up for all questions compared to the previous customer service survey conducted in October 2003.

OCT. 1, 2004

MAJ. GEN. Michael P. Wiedemer retired from the Air Force after thirty-two years of service. He had been DeCA director since August 2002. **CEO Patrick Nixon** became acting director.

OCT. 4, 2004

NAVY VICE ADM. Justin D. McCarthy was appointed acting chairman of the Commissary Operating Board. He replaced **Vice Adm. Charles W. Moore Jr.** who retired October 1.



2005: TYNDALL Air Force Base, Florida. Store managers pose for a photo, from left: Tom Crichton, computer-assisted ordering (CAO); Roger Davis, meat department work leader; Casper Jones, produce department manager; Tong Anconetani, assistant front end manager; Sue Drotter, grocery manager; Steve Paros, store administrator; Supong Davis, front end manager; Frank Toves, commissary intern; and Mike Yaksich, store director. The Tyndall commissary, winner of the Best Large Commissary, CONUS Award for 2002 and runner-up in 2004, was built in 1979 and was renovated in 1995. Equipped with twelve checkouts, a deli, and a bakery, it had a 34,680-square-foot sales area. DeCA photo: Cherie Huntington

2004

Technnology: There were 1.5 billion cell phones being used worldwide.

FEB. 5, 2005

THE DeCA central distribution center in Kaiserslautern, Germany, began to support AAFES in Iraq, starting with 58,000 pounds (4,527 cases) of beef, donuts, muffins, cookies, pastries, pies, cheese, lunchmeat, bacon, and similar items, valued at \$126,995. (Msg., Austin S. Romesburg, chief, CDC Kaiserslautern, to Dr. Peter D. Skirbunt, 4 May 2005)

JANUARY 2005

FIRST ISSUE of Military Retailer magazine, published by Downey Communications of Bethesda, Maryland. Retailer combined two former Downey magazines: Military Grocer and Military Exchange, which had both been published since 1991.

JANUARY 2005

PATRICK B. Nixon, agency CEO and acting director, received the Secretary of Defense Medal for Meritorious Civilian Service. **Charles Abell**, principal deputy undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, presented the award during a ceremony at the Pentagon. The award recognized Nixon's creative vision and leadership as DeCA's CEO from June 2001 to August 2004.

MARCH 24, 2005

A MEMO from the office of **David S. Chu**, undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, established a Defense Resale Executive Board to "provide advice on the complementary operation of military commissaries and exchanges." **Charles Abell**, Chu's principal under secretary, was to be the board chairman. The board membership included the heads of commissary and exchange systems, as ad hoc (non-voting) members, as well as the assistant secretary of manpower and reserve affairs and high-ranking logistics personnel from each of the four major services. The board was to meet at least twice each year. (*Exchange and Commissary News*, Apr 2005, pp. 3, 122)

FEBRUARY 2005

FOR THE third straight year, DeCA's financial records exceeded the requirements of the President's Management Agenda. (DeCA news release 10-05, 8 Feb 2005)

APRIL 7, 2005

PATRICK NIXON, CEO and acting director of DeCA, testified before the House Armed Services Committee's Military Personnel subcommittee on the fiscal 2006 defense budget. This hearing was a review of Military Resale and Morale, Welfare, and Recreation activities. Witnesses were very complimentary of the commissaries.

MAY 2, 2005

JOHN MOLINO, deputy assistant secretary of defense for military community and family policy, was surprised to discover the Army was exploring the idea of privatizing commissaries. Molino, speaking for DoD, dismissed the idea. "As a department, the only thing we're pursuing is efforts to strengthen the benefit for the years to come." (*Federal Times*, 2 May 2005, p. 9)

MAY 13, 2005

THE FIRST BRAC 2005 list was announced. It included ten bases recommended for closure on which DeCA had stores, and suggested decreases of troop levels at other bases with stores. However, it also proposed to increase troop levels at other bases with commissary facilities that might not be adequate for the new troop strengths. DeCA would possibly lose some facilities while gaining others. This list was the first proposal; it was not final.

MAY 16-20, 2005

DeCA LEADERS discussed the agency's future during the 2005 DeCA training event at Nashville, Tennessee. CEO **Patrick Nixon** and subsequent speakers, including Chief Operating Officer Scott Simpson, DeCA West Director **Rick Page**, DeCA East Director **Bonnie Kanitz**, and DeCA Europe Director **Mike Dowling**, discussed such topics as base realignment and closure, restationing, and the "store of the future."

JULY 7, 2005

International Terrorism: Fifty-two people were killed and about seven hundred wounded in London when a series of coordinated bomb blasts struck the city's public transport system during the morning rush hour.

AUG. 24, 2005

THE BRAC commission approved the merger of DeCA's Midwest and Eastern regions with the

AUG. 26-29, 2005

HURRICANE KATRINA wreaked havoc on the Gulf Coast, particularly Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. More than fifteen hundred people were killed; hundreds of thousands were left homeless, and more than \$75 billion in property was destroyed. Most of the death and destruction took place in New Orleans, where 80 percent of the city was flooded after several of its levees broke. The disaster disrupted commissary operations at Naval Construction Battalion Center Gulfport and Keesler Air Force Base in Mississippi, and Naval Support Activity New Orleans, Louisiana.

SEPT. 10, 2005

A TEAM of DeCA volunteers and base engineers were able to open a temporary commissary at Naval Construction Battalion Center Gulfport, Mississippi. The temporary five-thousand-square-foot-



2005: GULFPORT, Mississippi. The damage from Hurricane Katrina is visible on the front side of the commissary at Naval Construction Battalion Center Gulfport. By September 10, less than two weeks after the Katrina struck, DeCA opened a temporary commissary on the installation. U.S. Navy photo

store was set up in the base's recreation center. The Gulfport commissary had sustained major damage from Hurricane Katrina. **Walt Taylor**, store director, said the biggest challenge was addressing the logistics associated with adapting a recreation-oriented building into a supermarket setting. A twenty-man team from DeCA headquarters and eighteen staff members from Gulfport's commissary were augmented by the base's public works department and local Navy engineers.

SEPT. 29, 2005

THE KEESLER commissary reopened for seven-days-a-week operations at a temporary location—a 25,000-square-foot facility—that had served as the base's community center prior to Hurricane Katrina. The commissary would operate at its temporary site until a new 106,000-square-foot facility was built. On the same day, the Naval Support Activity New Orleans commissary resumed operations in the same facility as before the storm.

OCT. 20, 2005

THE DeCA "Virtual Commissary" opened for business. Authorized commissary shoppers could access *www.commissaries.com* and purchase gift baskets for friends or family, and have them sent anywhere in the world. By the summer of 2006, the site would list eighty items, ranging from snack packs to assortments of crackers, canned cheeses, cookies, candies, beverages and coffee packs.

NOVEMBER 2005

WORLDWIDE implementation of DeCA's returned check process, initially undertaken in 2003, was completed.

DEC. 31, 2005

IBM WAS awarded a five-year contract for DeCA's point-of-sale technology contract, known as the Commissary Advanced Resale Transaction System (CARTS). (DeCA news release 23-06, 10 May 2006)

2006

FEB. 6-10, 2006

DECA HELD its Strategic Planning conference at Williamsburg, Virginia.

FEBRUARY -
MARCH 2006

FOUR PEOPLE connected with the U.S. military in Germany—two of them with the commissaries—inexplicably contracted a deadly form of meningitis. Three died, one of whom was **Kimberly Wesson**, who had been a cashier at the Schweinfurt commissary since July 2005. Another, **Christopher Screen**, age sixteen, a bagger at the Kitzingen commissary, was diagnosed in time

thanks to quick action by his parents, who were alert to the symptoms after a public awareness effort followed the three deaths in February. The source of the meningitis was never discovered.

MARCH 28, 2006

DeCA ANNOUNCED that a six-month "local purchase" produce test in southeastern Virginia's Hampton Roads area commissaries had achieved resounding success. This was the first step in DeCA's worldwide initiative to deal directly with local and regional suppliers for the produce in its commissaries. Before, DeCA had bought its produce exclusively from Defense Supply Center, Philadelphia.

MAY 9, 2006

THE COMMISSARY at Naval Construction Battalion Center Gulfport, Mississippi, reopened less than eight months after the store had been heavily damaged by Hurricane Katrina.

MAY 10, 2006

DeCA ACHIEVED an "unqualified" financial certification for the fourth straight year. (DeCA news release 23-06, 10 May 2006)

JUNE 29, 2006

PATRICK B. NIXON was officially named **director** of the Defense Commissary Agency.

SEPT. 25, 2006

ARMY LT. GEN. Ann E. Dunwoody was appointed chairman of the Commissary Operating Board. Dunwoody succeeded Navy **Vice Adm. Justin D. McCarthy**, who had served as acting chairman since October 4, 2004.

OCT. 1, 2006

DeCA OBSERVED its fifteenth anniversary.

DEC. 26, 2006

U.S. History: **Gerald Ford**, the thirty-eighth president of the United States (1974–77), died at Rancho Mirage, California. He was the first president not to be elected as either president or vice-president, taking office after **President Richard Nixon** resigned in 1974.

DEC. 30, 2006

World History: **Saddam Hussein** was hanged by **Iraqi officials** in Baghdad after having being convicted of crimes against humanity by an Iraqi court on November 5.

2007

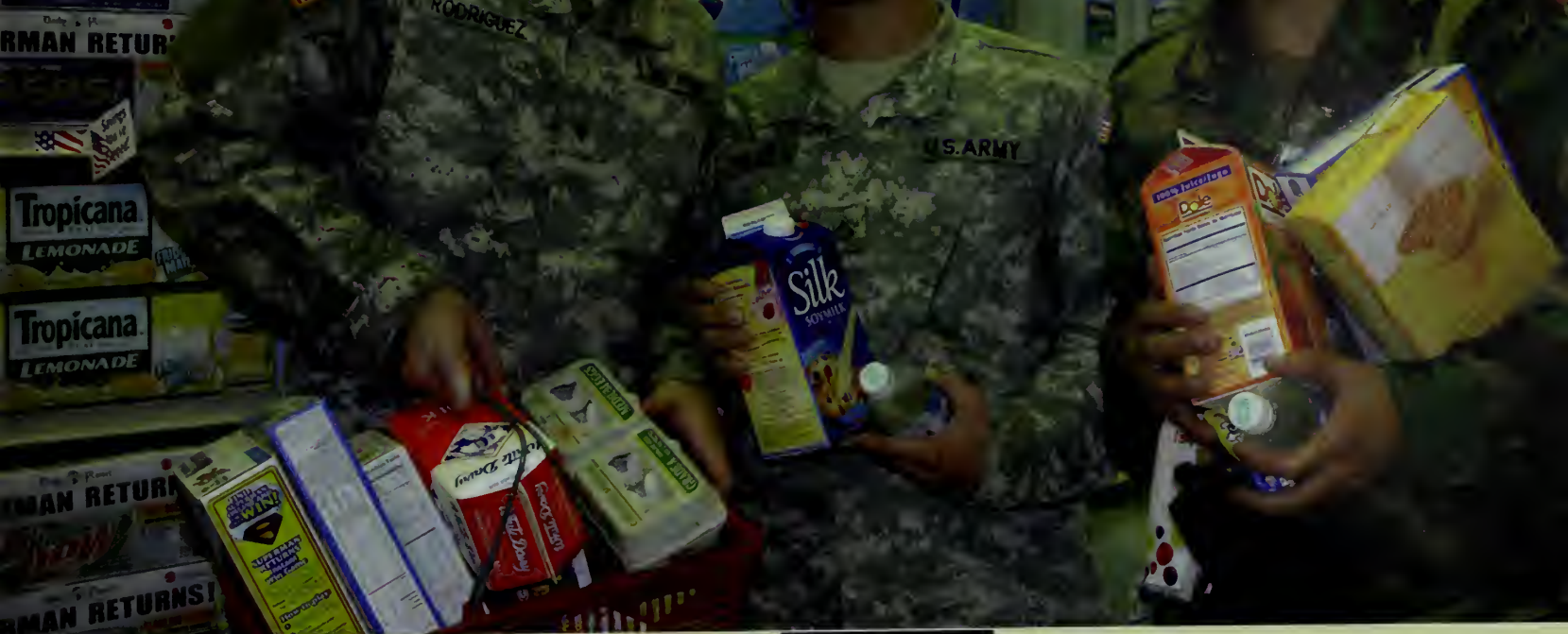
JAN. 22, 2007

DeCA ANNOUNCED that **Scott Simpson**, chief operating officer, and **Richard S. "Rick" Page**, director, DeCA West would swap jobs effective mid May. (DeCA news release 03-07, 22 Jan 2007)

MARCH 12, 2007

DeCA RECEIVED its fifth straight unqualified

2006: CAMP EAGLE, South Korea. DeCA's newest commissary opened at Camp Eagle on August 30. The store also serves military stationed on Camp Long, six miles away. The 4,000-square-foot sales floor carries all the necessary subsistence of soldier life. Troops in the Wonju area are glad they no longer have to make a two-hour drive to the commissaries at Yongsan or Osan Air Base. U.S. Army photo. Susan Barkley



audit opinion for fiscal 2006. (DeCA news release 19-07, 12 Mar 2007)

MARCH 20, 2007

DeCA BECAME a model organization for financial accountability after receiving the highest score in DoD for its fiscal 2006 statement of assurance. The statement of assurance represents an agency director's assessment concerning the effectiveness of his agency's internal controls. (DeCA news release 20-07, 20 Mar 2007)

MARCH 20, 2007

DeCA EUROPE Director Michael Dowling was named to succeed **Bonnie Kanitz** as director of DeCA East. Kanitz had previously announced her retirement, effective in August. (DeCA news release 23-07, 20 Mar 2007)

APRIL 16, 2007

U.S. History: A Virginia Tech student killed thirty-two members of the university community and then himself in Blacksburg, Virginia, in the deadliest school shooting rampage in U.S. history.

APRIL 20, 2007

DeCA OPENED the U.S. military's largest commissary at Naval Base San Diego, as patrons flocked to the 126,000-square-foot store for the grand opening. The store was built with a separate Grab-N-Go entrance, expanded departments, and informational kiosks.

JULY 1, 2007

U.S. MILITARY commissaries celebrated their 140th anniversary. On this date in 1867, Congress

JULY 31, 2007

authorized the Army to begin selling items to soldiers of all ranks.

AUG. 27, 2007

DeCA ANNOUNCED that **Tom Milks** was the agency's newest member of the Senior Executive Service and had been named director of DeCA Europe. Milks' region director assignment came after serving fourteen months as the agency's director of sales. He replaced **Michael Dowling** as DeCA Europe director. Dowling succeeded **Bonnie Kanitz** as director of DeCA East.



Tom Milks

OCT. 27-28, 2007

THE COMMISSARY Operating Board changed its name to Defense Commissary Agency Board of Directors.

OCT. 30, 2007

DeCA DIRECTOR **Patrick Nixon** retired from federal service and accepted appointment as president of the American Logistics Association.

CHIEF Operating Officer **Richard S. "Rick" Page** was appointed acting director of the agency.



Rick Page

“... we ask so very much of our service members and their families, and the commissary provides a tangible benefit that can lift some of their burden. ...Our patrons are the best America has to offer; and we have a responsibility...to provide them the very best shopping experience we can.”

— Army Lt. Gen. Ann E. Dunwoody, chairman, Department of Defense Commissary Operating Board, during an interview with *Exchange and Commissary News*, April 2007.

EPILOGUE

WHEN PATRICK NIXON was appointed the new director of the Defense Commissary Agency in June 2006, the commissaries had, for the first time in history, a director who had worked at store level as a commissary officer, had first-hand experience with store-level operations, and understood store-level concerns. He had been an enlisted man, had been employed by a major civilian grocery chain, had worked his way up the commissaries' civilian career ladder through region directorships to the top spot in the agency, and had already acquired two valuable years' experience as acting director. All boded very well for the future of the agency and the benefit.

An enthusiastic student of history, Nixon was well aware of the commissary legacy he inherited. He was also very familiar with one of the phrases engraved on the north entrance to the National Archives building in Washington, D.C.: “What is Past is Prologue.”



2006: NCBC GULFPORT, Mississippi. DeCA CEO and Acting Director Patrick Nixon (right), who would soon be named DeCA director, helps cut the ribbon for the grand reopening of the Gulfport store on May 9, 2006. With Nixon are Representative Gene Taylor (D-Mississippi, left) and base commander, Capt. George Eichert (middle). The reopening took place just seven-and-a-half months after the store had been heavily damaged by Hurricane Katrina. It was appropriate that the store could be rebuilt so quickly for the naval construction battalion center that was home to the Navy SeaBees, who had for more than half a century established a well-earned reputation for building and repairing all sorts of facilities in record time.

DeCA photo: Ray Johnson



'IT'S YOUR CHOICE. MAKE IT HEALTHY!' was a wellness campaign that DeCA began in partnership with the military's medical provider, TRICARE, to highlight healthful foods available in military commissaries. In concert with this program, DeCA added a military dietitian to its headquarters staff in 2007 to increase opportunities to educate customers on how to select meal items with improved nutritional value. In combination with these initiatives, selection of the commissaries' assortment of natural and organic foods continued to grow. TOP PHOTO: Maj. Karen E. Fauber, DeCA's first agency dietitian, explains the benefits of nutrition in front of a vegetable and fruit display at the National Guard public affairs conference in Anchorage, Alaska. DeCA photo: Nancy O'Neill LEFT PHOTO: Tom Milks, at that time director of the agency's sales directorate, stands next to a prototype of the wellness information kiosk that was being tested at the Fort Lee, Virginia, commissary in 2006. The new store at San Diego received kiosks in its health and wellness section as well as in the produce, meat, and grocery areas. DeCA photo: Kevin L. Robinson

Still, not even the wisest of us can always predict future events by studying the past. History provides guidelines and general directions, not a road map. As one scholar has said, "History doesn't really repeat, but it echoes." Though there are few (if any) outright duplications, there are many trends similar to those of the past.

Nixon knew no matter what course he would take or what plans and decisions he, his staff, and the Board of Directors* would make, the future was still uncertain. But there were two sure things: The future would bring change; and the benefit was in the capable hands of leaders who were

well-acquainted with commissary history, and who knew how to make history work for them. They knew what previous leaders had accomplished and what obstacles they had overcome. DeCA leadership was well-prepared for future challenges and had powerful partnerships in Congress, DoD, and industry to help strengthen the benefit. With such support DeCA could make the adjustments necessary to successfully meet future changes and challenges.

The future has often been, and very likely will continue to be, very different from what we expect. So, when considering new and better ways of doing business

and the future of the commissary benefit, there is no telling exactly what commissaries will be like in future decades. Only one thing can be stated with any assurance: As long as any major threat to the United States exists, and as long as the country maintains an all-volunteer force, commissaries will continue to play an important role in the national defense.

Over the years, many predictions have been made about commissaries, and only a very few have proven to be accurate. Some of the most obviously erroneous came in 1945, when it seemed that most of the stores were going to be closed. Today, as

* — The Commissary Operating Board was renamed the Defense Commissary Agency Board of Directors on August 27, 2007.

many changes are being planned, experience shows that other, unplanned transformations will almost certainly occur.

There is, for example, an evolving picture of what the “store of the future” will be like. Initially called DeCA’s “prototype commissary for the next generation,” the new store opened at Naval Base San Diego in 2007 contains many possible facets of future commissaries. However, stores of the future will follow no single model. Rather, they will fit the needs of their customers based upon local conditions.

FUTURE POSSIBILITIES

Still, this history would be remiss if it did not offer some general sense of where experience indicates commissaries are going. Keeping firmly in mind that history echoes without actually repeating, here are several predictions, made in the full realization that prophecy is a very tricky and thankless business:

- Thanks to the Internet, there will soon be ways to make commissary home deliveries—or, at least, make commissary Web site-generated deliveries—possible again.

- Commissaries will continue to come under scrutiny every four years and with every new president. That has been the case with new presidential administrations since 1928. Whether the commissary benefit remains in its current form or changes rests in the hands of the Defense Department and Congress, the makeup of which change every election year.

- Studies and committees will never completely leave the commissaries alone, but...

- As long as the Guard and Reserves have full-time shopping privileges, the draft stays dormant, the all-volunteer military remains, and there is a tangible threat from terrorists or other enemies, the commissaries will remain, because the benefit they provide will continue to be important to maintaining a viable military.

A DISTORTED SENSE OF HISTORY

Commissary proponents who are slow to recognize history’s lessons and importance need to be reminded that for many years, commissary opponents used a distorted

version of history while attempting to disparage, belittle, and otherwise damage the commissaries’ image and credibility. On several occasions, they had succeeded in influencing public opinion and the perception of Congress so as to seriously endanger the benefit.

One of the many reasons this history has been written has been to inform people as to the true origins of the modern commissary system, and to do away once and for all with the “remote post” version of commissary creation. For decades, commissary opponents said (and sometimes still say) that “Commissaries should get back to their original purpose and stick to selling only at remote posts.” That argument was convenient and simple: close the many stores located in urban areas like San Antonio, San Diego, Seattle, or Washington, D.C., or at least turn them over to private enterprise. The fact that the “remote posts” argument was false never stopped anyone from using it.

After DeCA demonstrated to the Congressional Budget Office in the mid-1990s that the “remote post” myth of commissary history was fallacious, the story has not been repeated by the CBO. Others, however, still use it. The myth was once so widespread, and was once so widely accepted as true, that it may well begin to resurface. As years pass, personnel at DeCA and the CBO who are familiar with the truth will retire or move on to other jobs. New commissary people who remain ignorant of the truth will be powerless to combat resurrected old misconceptions.

Commissary people have usually ignored the myth because they’re too busy on a day-to-day basis bringing the benefit to those who earned it. They may also ignore the myth because they think it doesn’t matter—not only is it ancient history, it’s not even true. But not everyone is aware of that, least of all freshmen senators and representatives.

This is not a situation in which silence yields good results. Commissary opponents, or those predisposed to oppose commissaries, do take notice, and are all too willing to accept the “remote posts” myth as factual.

As previously noted, Nancy Tucker, longtime editor of *Military Market*, stated in 1985, “The outpost argument is a persistent one, and is, therefore, dangerous.” The more often a simple untruth is repeated, the more likely uninformed people are to believe it. And in widespread, unquestioning belief, there is considerable danger. Commissary people need to be aware of the facts, and they need to keep spreading the truth.

COMMISSARY STATUS QUO

There are many reasons for keeping commissaries into the foreseeable future. We have enumerated many of them in these pages. The most obvious is the fact that overseas commissaries provide Americans stationed in foreign countries or far-flung domestic locations with familiar products, in a friendly atmosphere, at affordable prices—“a taste of home” important to the upkeep of morale. Private companies would be unable to match that level of benefit.

But there are many other excellent reasons. By providing savings to all customers, whether in remote locations or in big cities with high costs of living, commissaries are an integral part of the total compensation package, vital to maintaining an all-volunteer force. They encourage people to reenlist, preserving a well-trained, dedicated military, making sure the armed forces’ training investment is well-spent, and saving the expense of retraining the majority of the force every few years. More importantly, they encourage spouses to favor reenlistment, as well, and the spouse’s opinion is often the deciding factor in making family decisions.

The ever-increasing use of food stamps by military families is of great concern. In fiscal 2006, a total of \$26,225,702 in food stamps, and \$28,866,647 in WIC (Women, Infants and Children) coupons, were redeemed by military families at the commissaries. These figures do not include those stamps and coupons used by military families who shopped somewhere other than the commissary, to avoid the embarrassment of being seen by their peers while using food stamps.

In congressional testimony and in customer surveys, enlisted families have

2007: GRAFENWOEHR, Germany. The new commissary at Grafenwoehr, Germany, is pictured a few months before its September 26 grand opening. In a shared AAFES/DeCA shopping center, the commissary features a deli, self-serve bakery, salad bar, and dramatically increased retail space and products to accommodate the larger troop presence expected in the near future. *DeCA photo: Gerri Young*





repeatedly stated that commissaries are essential to morale, especially when a change of duty station necessitates a family move. Many have also said they could not continue to remain in the military without the savings their commissary benefit provides for a family of four, for whom the estimated savings is nearly \$3,000 per year. The \$500 yearly stipend suggested in the 2005 CBO report would not come close to making up the difference.

COMMISSARY LEADERSHIP

Commissaries have often been blessed with visionaries who steered the benefit through time and change. By nature, such people are patient, as well as confident that their best ideas will eventually come to fruition. At the same time, most of them have realized it is difficult, and even counterproductive, to try to force changes upon people or a system not ready and willing to accept them. Therefore, before the 1970s, commissaries usually clung to tried and accepted methods of operation, often lagging behind the private sector. Changes in the benefit occurred only very gradually, and usually only locally.

Three decades later, patience is a luxury commissary visionaries cannot always afford. The benefit functions in a difficult environment, where immediate results often take precedence over careful, measured progress. Changes arrive with breakneck speed, and the Defense Commissary Agency now strives to be on the cutting edge of grocery retailing rather than lagging behind it. No longer is a basic knowledge of the grocery business sufficient for running the system; more than ever before, a grasp of economics, business trends, politics, and technology's potential are essential for commissary leadership.

Even as this history was being readied for publication, several major changes in commissary leadership took place. In August 2007, Dr. David Chu, undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, announced that the Commissary Operating Board—the governing board of the commissary system—had changed its name to the Defense Commissary Agency Board of Directors. This was done to

emphasize the agency's business nature, as well as the board's focus on making decisions that were responsive to the needs of commissary customers.

In October, Patrick Nixon retired from federal service to become the president of the American Logistics Association, which had supported commissaries since 1920. Chief Operating Officer Richard S. Page, DeCA's senior SES, became acting director. He was well-known throughout DeCA, and the agency continued to flourish during his eight months at the helm. In May 2008, Philip E. Sakowitz Jr. became director, and Army Reserve Command Sgt. Maj. Victor M. Garcia became the agency's senior enlisted advisor.

VIEWS OF THE FUTURE

As changes occur, the infrastructure supporting those changes will of necessity have to change, as well. By the end of 2007, the Armed Forces' methods of carrying out their missions were changing in order to better combat the threat of worldwide terrorism. Overseas, the changing political and military situation in the post-Cold War world prompted the Defense Department to plan for major redeployments, leaving most of their bases in central Europe and establishing installations in eastern Europe, Africa, or west Asia. This would enable them to monitor events in the Middle East, and to be in position to take action as appropriate. In such a scenario, DeCA might well have to establish stores at such bases, perhaps similar to those that had existed for decades in South Korea.

In view of the distinct possibility of force realignments at home and abroad, and the resultant base closings and realignments, the bottom line will probably show that DeCA will lose some facilities while gaining others. But exactly where DeCA's new "stores of the future" will be placed is open to speculation.

Historically, what happened inside commissaries has usually been a reflection of what was happening in the civilian grocery business, as well as how the citizens of this nation viewed the military. Today, the civilian grocery industry is more dynamic than

ever before—and the commissaries are keeping pace. In fact, in some areas, for the first time in history, the commissaries are striving to set the pace. Their success in the long run will depend upon the viability of emerging technologies and the commissaries' adaptability to unforeseen events and new technologies in the future.

QUO VADIS?

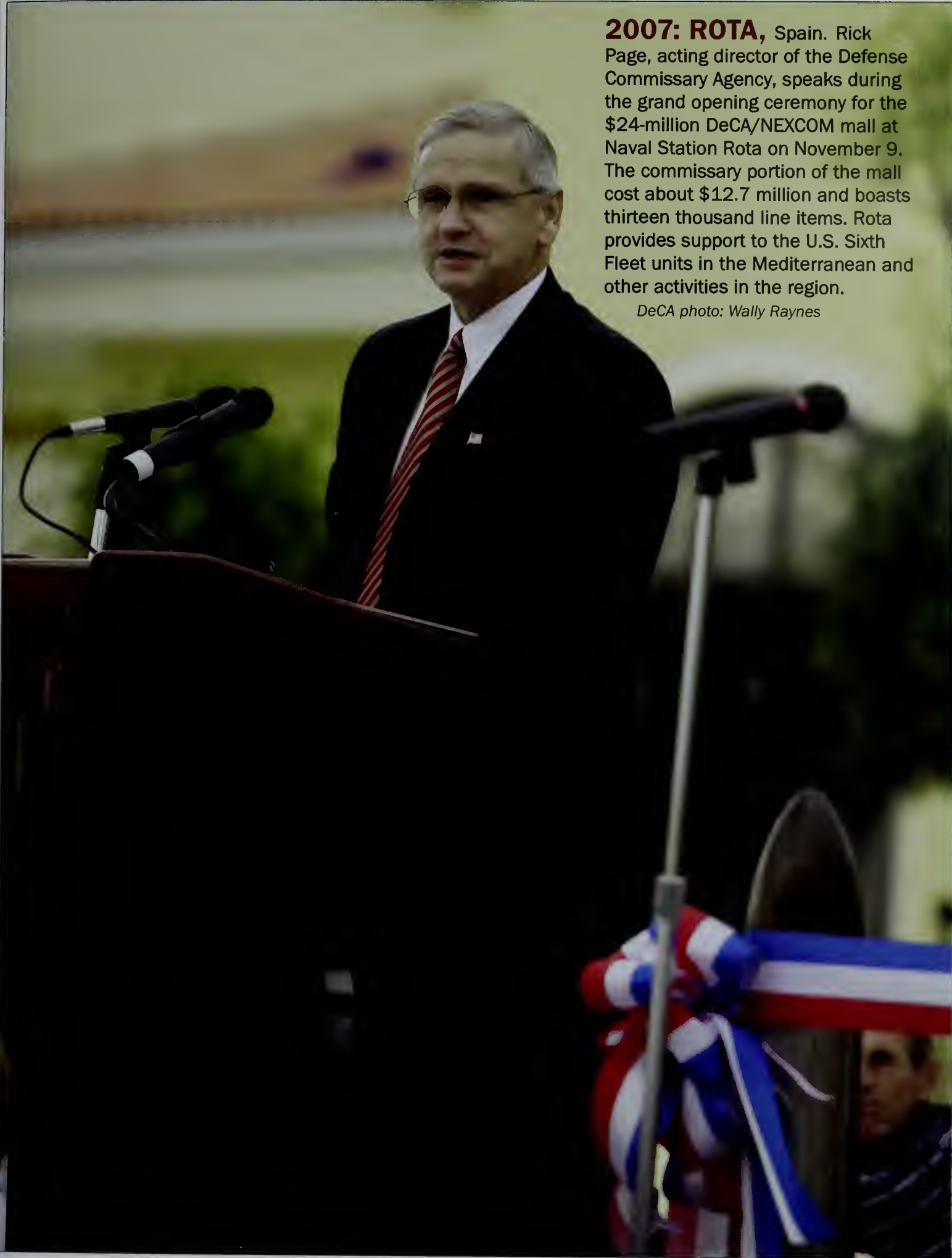
It's an ancient, famous question, entirely applicable to the commissaries today: Where are the commissaries going?

As DeCA looks to the future, it is important to define the benefit and its management structure. There is a need to articulate as many positions as possible, including the requirements of a modern supermarket—the environment in which DeCA operates—to assure the stores can carry those items that customers expect to find, assuring the commissary benefit is defined and supportable, and that the criteria for their existence are clear and understandable.

Commissaries need to be poised and ready to face any major changes—such as future BRAC actions, troop repositioning, and the ongoing transformation of the Defense Department. When recent transformations began, since it was already a consolidated defense agency, DeCA was well ahead of other activities in preparation for the Defense Department's move to a total force concept.

The agency needs and wishes to stay on the leading edge, to be the example to which the Defense Department can point: DeCA is an agency that is experienced at preparing for future events; DeCA stepped up, and did its part; and DeCA is ready to move ahead to the next stage of development.

No longer content to follow slowly in the footsteps of civilian industry, the commissaries have now taken the initiative to be on the cutting edge of the retail grocery business. The future is constantly changing, only a moment away, and is happening even as you read. It arrives quietly and suddenly, and only those who have prepared for it will be at all ready. More than at any other time in U.S. history, commissaries are, in fact, busily preparing for that future.

A photograph of Rick Page, acting director of the Defense Commissary Agency, speaking at a podium during a grand opening ceremony. He is wearing a dark suit, a white shirt, and a red and white striped tie. The podium has two microphones. In the foreground, there is a large red, white, and blue ribbon bow. The background is slightly blurred, showing greenery and a building.

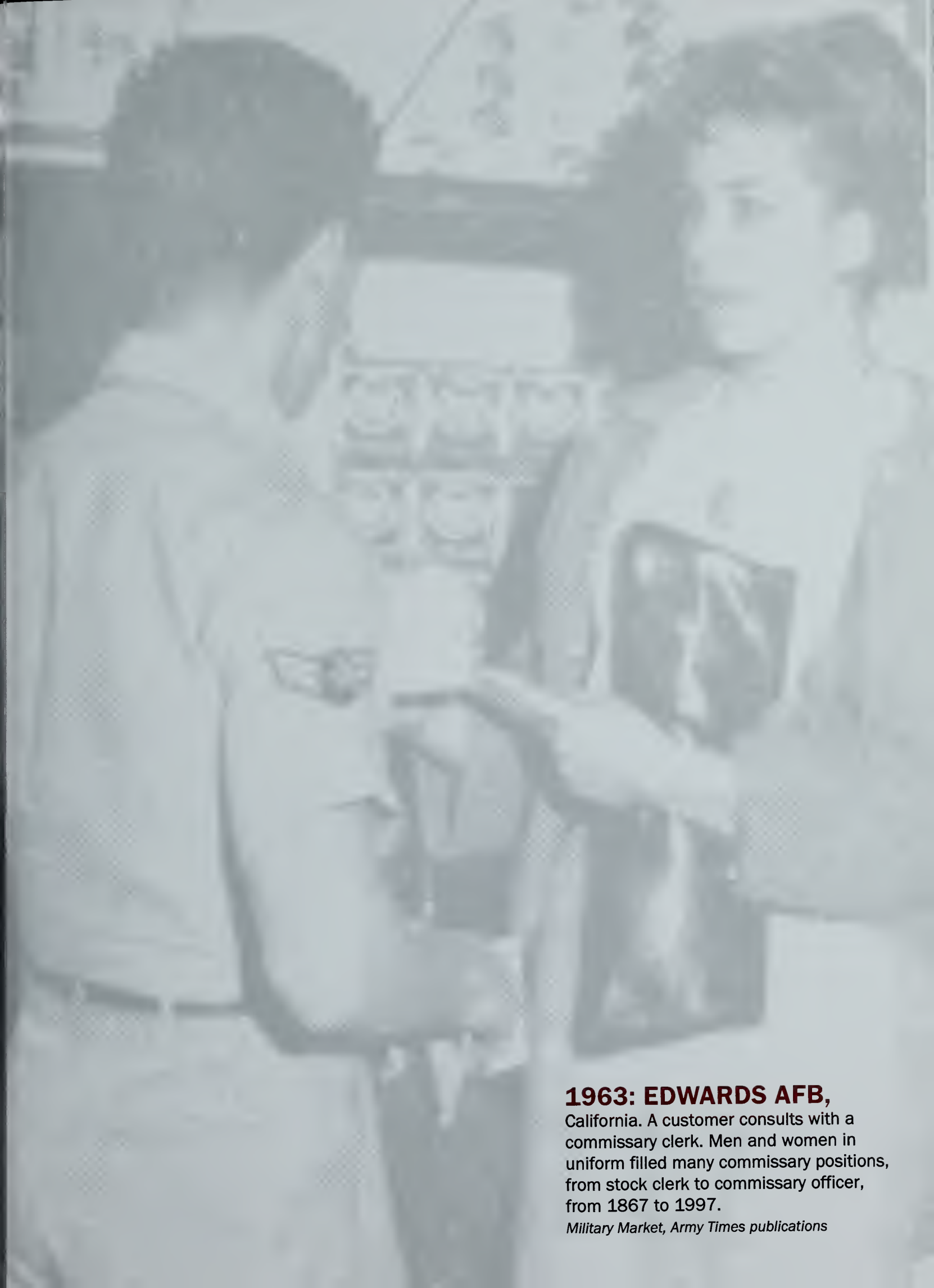
2007: ROTA, Spain. Rick Page, acting director of the Defense Commissary Agency, speaks during the grand opening ceremony for the \$24-million DeCA/NEXCOM mall at Naval Station Rota on November 9. The commissary portion of the mall cost about \$12.7 million and boasts thirteen thousand line items. Rota provides support to the U.S. Sixth Fleet units in the Mediterranean and other activities in the region.

DeCA photo: Wally Raynes

APPENDICES

DETAILS, STATISTICS, LOCATIONS, INSIGHTS, INDIVIDUALS, and ANECDOTES on COMMISSARIES and SUBSISTENCE OPERATIONS

- 1.** Alleged Commissary Competition with Civilian Stores, 1927
- 2.** Closure of 24 Stores by the Services in a Concession to the Philbin Committee, 1949
- 3.** Comic Relief: Armed Services Food Slang
- 4.** Commissary & Subsistence Leadership, 1775-2008
- 5.** Members of the Bowers Commission, 1975
- 6.** Members of the Jones Commission, 1989
- 7.** Service Commissary Systems Headquarters and Region/Field Offices, 1989-90, on the Eve of Commissary Consolidation
- 8.** Members of the DeCA Transition Team, 1990-1991
- 9.** DeCA's Key Personnel, October 1, 1991 and June 1, 2008
- 10.** DeCA Region Maps and Organizational Charts, 1991 and 2008
- 11.** Locations of DeCA's Original Commissaries, October 1, 1991
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- 13.** Commissary Openings and Closures under DeCA, 1991-2008
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- 16.** DeCA Troop Support Personnel Deployed to Support Operations in Somalia (1992-1994) and Haiti (1994-1995)
- 17.** Proposed BRAC 2005 Closures of Bases with Commissaries, after adjustments in 2006-2008
- 18.** All Known Commissary Locations, 1867-2008



1963: EDWARDS AFB,
California. A customer consults with a
commissary clerk. Men and women in
uniform filled many commissary positions,
from stock clerk to commissary officer,
from 1867 to 1997.

Military Market, Army Times publications

Appendix 1

Alleged Commissary Competition with Civilian Stores, 1927

In 1927, the community store and commissary at the Naval Proving Grounds, Dahlgren, Virginia, was accused by local merchants of unfair competition. This is the first documented instance of such an accusation being made about the commissaries, but similar claims became common at multiple locations in later years. The story is best told by the documents themselves. All are printed here as originally written, complete with misspellings, except for the names of the individuals filing the complaints; to protect their families' privacy, only their initials are used here.

The Initial Petition and Allegations:

(Source: Dahlgren Papers, Letter of J. F. S., et al, to Congressman R. Walton Moore, May 10, 1927.)

Owens Post Office, Virginia
May 10, 1927.

Hon. R. Walton Moore,
House of Rep. Washington D.C.

Dear Sir:

We the undersigned merchants of King George Co., state of Virginia, do take this means of petitioning you for relief in regard to the Stock Co., which is running a store at Dahlgren, Va., on the government reservation.

They pay no rent, house furnished by U. S. Government, no taxes and no transportation, as Gov. boats haul their goods, when not hauled by Gov. trucks from Fredericksburg, which we know to have been the case in one car load of feed. Now under such circumstances it is impossible for us to compete with them in prices, for they not only sell to gov. employees but to anyone also send their trucks out in Virginia to deliver and take orders; consequently we and the State are losing the business. It has been the direct cause of one store going out of business and if some action is not taken many more will have to close the doors.

We would be glad if you would investigate this matter and give us any assistance in your power.

(Signed) J. F. S.
W. H. S.
M. L. M.
C. B. G.
W. T. A.
E. R. M.

Congressman Moore forwarded the petition to Rear Admiral C. C. Bloch, USN, the Chief of the Navy's Bureau of Ordnance. On May 16, the Admiral sent it on to Captain H. R. Stark, USN, the Inspector of Ordnance in Charge at Dahlgren, who supplied a detailed, sixteen-point rebuttal to the accusations of the seven merchants.

The Most Pertinent Portions of Those Sixteen Points:

1. The store in question is the Dahlgren Community Store located on the station.
2. This store is operated solely for the benefit of the federal employees of this station. It is under direct supervision of the Inspector and a Board of Control composed of three commissioned officers and two civil service employees.
3. No individual owns any stock in the store, or makes any profit from its sales. The store is, as its name implies, a community store. Merchandise is sold only at such profit as to insure the continuance of the store.
4. The store is self-supporting. All operating expenses, salaries of the Store Manager and Clerks, insurance, etc., cost of delivery truck, etc., are paid for by the store.
5. When the Proving Ground was established [in 1918], the federal employees had to import their provisions from Washington, Fredericksburg, Indian Head, or Quantico. Such individual distant supply was, obviously, unsatisfactory...
8. The enclosed petition would lead one to believe that the store sold extensively to other than employees of the station. This is not the case. Monthly average sales to [persons] other than employees are about \$75.00. Outside purchases are only occasional. The station's store sells to the countryside families only when they call at the store, and this is usually for a class of goods which the country stores in this vicinity do not carry, such as fresh meats, citrus fruits, and some brands of canned goods....Such sales have not been prohibited, as it is station policy, wherever possible, to assist the nearby Virginia farmers in any way it can without interfering with outside interests. In any case, the station has never solicited outside trade—outsiders have come to the store for an occasional purchase. In the interest of good will to the Virginia countryside, the store has not denied such practice.
9. The stores maintained by the signers of the petition cater to the farmers and other families living in their respective vicinities. The farmers have,

as a rule, their own butter, eggs, vegetables, and meats. These stores do not trade in the variety and kind of groceries and staples sold to the employees at the Proving Ground by the Dahlgren store. For instance, there is no fresh meat market at any store, except for the Dahlgren store, this side of Fredericksburg.

10. Since this store is on a Federal Reservation, and operated without profit for the benefit of the Federal employees, no Virginia State Tax is paid. The question of a state license was recently brought to the Inspector's attention. A letter from the State Tax commissioner, relating to the store tax, and the Inspector's reply thereto, are enclosed....

11. Referring to the statement "Government boats haul their goods": Fresh meats and green provisions purchased in Washington by the store are transported to Dahlgren on the U. S. S. Porpoise, a Government passenger boat operating between Washington, Indian Head, Quantico, and Dahlgren. This boat transports federal employees, and their effects, free of charge. Before the store was established, individuals ordering provisions...had them transported on the Porpoise. Approximately 60% of the store's goods come in this way. Other food-stuffs purchased come in by way of Pope's Creek, Md., or from Fredericksburg, and are transported on the same commercial carriers that supply the stores operated by the signers of the petition. Referring further to the statement... "hailed by Government trucks from Fredericksburg"... the petitioners seized on the only trip of this kind made within the last twenty months....For this trip, the store reimbursed the Government for gasoline, oil, chauffeur [driver], plus 35 % overhead, all in accordance with the Accounting Officer's Manual. The charge to the store for this one trip was \$19.00.

12. The country stores near the Station do make sales to employees of the Proving Ground, and to transients. It is the Inspector's opinion that these stores benefited by the Government activities at Dahlgren, and most of them have been established since the Proving Ground came into existence. However, these stores are so located, with the exception of one operated by J. F. S., that it would be impracticable for them to supply the needs of the Dahlgren employees, as the following table plainly indicates:-

Owner of Store.	Distance from Dahlgren.
J. F. S.	-- Close by.
H. M. S.	-- 3-miles.
C. B. G.	-- 6-miles.
W. T. A.	-- 7-1/2-miles.
E. R. M.	-- 16-miles.
*M. L. M.	-- 2-1/2-miles.

**M.L.M.'s store operates in a colored community for colored customers.*

13. Five of these seven stores (the exceptions being of H. M. S's and W. T. A's) were started after the station was established.

14. The Inspector has received frequent reports which plainly indicate that J. F. S. is the agitator against the Dahlgren Community Store. It is well understood that J. F. S. was responsible for the tax inquiry by the State of Virginia. It is apparent that the true status of the store was misrepresented to the Virginia State authorities.

15. The petition does not give the name of the owner of the store which it alleges was forced to close its doors with the plain insinuation that the Dahlgren store forced this. The store in question was built and operated by J. E. Wilkerson, a station employee. Its shelves were primarily stocked with clothing. Wilkerson informed the Inspector that competition with the Station store had nothing to do with his failure. He has made a voluntary statement with regard to this, which is enclosed.

16. In conclusion, the Dahlgren store administers to the needs of this station in food, and in a way that no other store now established in this vicinity could. Its sole purpose is in the interest of self-preservation for station employees.

(Source: *Dahlgren Papers*, Capt. H. R. Stark, USN, Inspector of Ordnance, to Rear Adm. C. C. Bloch, USN, Chief of the Bureau of Ordnance, May 24, 1927.) [*emphasis added*]

Upon receiving this reply from the inspector at Dahlgren, Admiral Bloch wrote to Congressman Moore

[*emphasis added*]:

There is a cooperative community store on the Naval Station at Dahlgren. No one receives any profit from the store. ... receipts from the sales of the store are used to support the expenses of maintaining it and the general aim is to have the store just carry itself without producing any profit. ...

The store does not cater to the general public...the average sales per month of this nature amount to only about \$75.00, which is only about one percent of the business of the store. ...

With reference to the complaint of the petitioners, it can be said that the store is not a stock company store, nor have any government trucks ever

hauled material from Fredericksburg to Dahlgren without cost to the store. ...

Of the six petitioners, only one has a store close by the station. ...

Recently, one of the petitioners brought this matter to the attention of tax authorities of the state of Virginia, and, after investigation, the Counsel for the State Tax Commission, Mr. W. Warren Wall, decided as follows:

"Since the store in question is run under the supervision of the inspector of Ordnance in charge of the Station ... and since this store is run primarily for the necessity and convenience of the officers and personnel of employees or the government, residing at the naval Proving Grounds, I am of the opinion that this store is an instrumentality of the Federal Government and hence is not subject to taxation by State authorities. ..."

(Source: Dahlgren Papers, Rear Admiral C. C. Bloch, USN, Chief of the Bureau of Ordnance, to Hon. R. Walton Moore, House of Representatives, undated.)

This exchange put an end to protests by the civilian merchants in the Dahlgren area. The essential facts have important modern parallels, and thus should not be lost on modern readers: (1) some of the merchants did business with people from the naval station, (2) they profited from that business, and (3) five of the seven merchants filing the petition, including the leader of their group, had not even opened their stores until the station had already been established.

These points are essentially the same arguments available to the commissaries when confronted by similar accusations today:

- 1) Had the station not existed, five of these seven men might well never have gone into business in the first place. Similarly, without modern bases, most of today's merchants (of all types) in the vicinity would have far less business. Their patrons include active duty members assigned to the base, civilian employees of the base, and retired military who settled near the base in order to take advantage of medical, dental, commissary, and exchange facilities available there.
- 2) Commissaries on many present-day bases pre-date many nearby businesses. This is especially true of Air Force bases, which were originally built away from large population centers because they needed plenty of room for flying instruction, practice, and scheduled air traffic. Therefore, many businesses existing near these bases today were established only after the base was well-established, and the surrounding area was gradually developed and populated as the nearby towns spread toward the bases. Other businesses were established specifically to take advantage of the on-base population, the population that had grown around the base, and the traffic of civilians working on the base. In all cases, the base—and the commissary—were first to arrive upon the scene, while cities grew up around, and sometimes because of, the bases.
- 3) Further, while commissary customers can shop at civilian stores if they wish, civilians cannot shop at commissaries. Therefore, it is only possible for civilian stores to attract customers from the commissaries, and not the other way around.
- 4) So the bottom line really is, "if there really is competition between commissaries and the local stores, then exactly who's competing with whom?" The argument that the commissaries are no longer needed because there are now grocery stores in the near vicinity ignores the history of local economic development and demographics, and is beside the point. It ignores the basic premise of the commissaries: Wherever the commissaries are located, in a city or in the midst of a desert, they will provide a cost savings to their customers in comparison with the nearest civilian stores. They therefore contribute to the military's quality of life and encourage enlistment and re-enlistment.

Appendix 2

Closure of 24 Stores by the Services in a Concession to the Philbin Committee, 1949

A letter to Congressman Carl Vinson from the Secretaries of the Army (Gordon Gray), Navy (Francis P. Matthews), and Air Force (W. Stuart Symington) confirmed that twenty-four commissaries had been closed as per the 22 August agreement between Rep. Philbin and the armed services.

However, the secretaries made their displeasure known, saying:

“The Department of Defense views as serious the detrimental effect on morale, welfare and the additional financial burdens which have been imposed upon our enlisted men as a result of the disestablishment of commissary stores. It is proposed that the entire question of commissary operations be reviewed in light of the above facts. This review would include a study of the advisability of reopening any of the foregoing commissary stores and, if the particular military department concerned decides that the closing of such store has worked a hardship on military personnel, such Service may reopen each store.

“Time has now permitted the accomplishment of a nation-wide survey of all Department of Defense commissaries. This survey has shown that the impact of the closing of commissaries on the serviceman is substantial. From the very beginning of the armed services, the commissary privilege has been integral to service life [time-wise, this was an exaggeration]. It was early written into law. It was thoroughly considered by the Hook Commission which deemed it balanced, to a large extent by the hardships and disadvantages of military life, and not to be considered as either more prevalent or superior to like privileges frequently occurring in industry. This privilege is of more concern to the married serviceman today than ever before. In his interests and in those of the entire defense establishment, as well as [those of] the American people, it should be preserved.

“The closing of commissaries affects not only the serviceman but also retired, disabled personnel and dependents of deceased veterans, to whom commissary privileges have only recently been extended. In view of the above, the Department of Defense cannot escape the conviction that any proposal substantially to alter the basic commissary statutes should be implemented only by formal congressional action to amend or rescind the laws.”

The Stores That Were Closed and Later Reopened: *(Note: dates of closure and reopening are usually unconfirmed or unavailable)*

<u>Store location</u>	<u>Service affiliation</u>
Naval Air Station Alameda, California	Navy
Naval Base Charleston, South Carolina	Navy
Fort Hamilton, New York	Army
Fort Lawton, Washington	Army
Fort McPherson, Georgia	Army
Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, Virginia	Navy
Goodfellow Air Force Base, Pennsylvania	Air Force
Naval Base Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	Navy
Naval Base Portsmouth, New Hampshire	Navy
San Bernardino Air Force Base [later, Norton AFB], California	Air Force
Schenectady General Depot, New York	Army

Stores Closed and not Reopened

<u>Store location</u>	<u>Service affiliation</u>
Charlotte Quartermaster Depot, North Carolina	Army
Chatham Air Force Base, Georgia	Air Force
Naval Supply Depot Clearfield, Ogden, Utah	Navy
Eleventh Naval District, Pacific & E Street, San Diego, California	Navy
Fort Banks, Massachusetts	Army
Fort Crockett, Texas	Army
Kansas City Record Center, Missouri	Army
Memphis General Depot, Tennessee	Army
Oliver General Hospital, Georgia	Army
St. Louis Administration Center, Missouri	Army
U.S. Naval Academy, Maryland	Navy
Yerba Buena Island, San Francisco, California	Navy

(Source: Ltr, Secretary of the Army (Gordon Gray), Navy (Francis P. Matthews), and Air Force (W. Stuart Symington) to Congressman Carl Vinson, 3 March 1950, in Binder, “Legislation: Uniform Operation of commissary stores, 1951, 1952,” on file with the DeCA historian.)

Appendix 3

Comic Relief: Armed Services Food Slang

THE FOLLOWING ARE HALLOWED, historical military (and sometimes civilian) slang terms for food, or—one of the military's favorite pastimes—using food terminology to graphically (and gruesomely) describe something entirely different. Their use dates back at least as far as indicated, and several are thousands of years old. Some have become obsolete, but others are still in use, and many have become commonly used by civilians. Still others have entered the dictionary as words in their own right.

The reader should take no offense to any of the terms listed here. This is not intended to be a politically correct list, but it is intended as an accurate compilation of social idioms—a study of some of the jargon that was popular at a given point in time. Some of the terms are still humorous, and others will make a person wince—which shows how timeless they really are, since inspiring those reactions was their original intent!

This list should not be taken as complete or all-inclusive, for two main reasons:

(1) Only those terms the author considers printable have been included. Had all the possible vulgar, profane, unseemly, sexist, racist, gross, and generally crude terms that have been unearthed been included, the list would be twice the size it is. A small sampling of these offensive terms have been included, but they are nothing compared to some of the terms that were simply too objectionable to be printed.

(2) In the military, it is as traditional to create clever new terms as it is to gripe about the food, no matter how good or bad it really is. Terms are forever being created; some catch on, while others don't; some are in widespread use, while others are strictly localized. That means terms are being created even as the reader scans these pages.

When terms are credited to one service over another, this is not meant to imply exclusive use, but rather indicates either (1) the service with which the term apparently originated, or (2) the service that seems to have used it most often. The same goes for time periods of usage; while a term may be labelled "World War I," that does not mean it was used only during World War I. (This writer's father, for example, referred to American soldiers as "Doughboys" all his life, eight decades after World War I ended; "GIs" simply never caught on with him.)

The primary printed sources for compiling this listing were Bruce Catton's *Mr. Lincoln's Army*; Paul Dickson's *Chow: A Cook's Tour of Military Food*; the Stackpole Company's *Army Almanac*; and Erna Risch's *Quartermaster Corps: Organization, Supply, and Services*. However, terms seem to constantly turn up from dozens of other (and often completely unexpected) sources. Readers familiar with other food-related or commissary-related slang terms are encouraged to contact the DeCA historian: 1300 E Avenue, Fort Lee, VA, 23801-1800.

AIRWING ALPO: any Meal, Ready-to-Eat (MRE). **Alpo** referred to a brand name of pet food. (*Gulf War, 1990-91*)

ALBATROSS: roasted, boiled, or stewed chicken. (*Navy and Marines, South Pacific, World War II*)

ALFALFA: World War I term for dehydrated vegetables, especially carrots, which—if improperly handled—developed a grasslike aroma and flavor. This was the subject of one popular ditty among the American troops:

"They feed us carrots every day
Which taste just like alfalfa hay
Hinky, dinky, parlay voo!"*

* — *To an American doughboy in France, "Parlay Voo" was how one spelled—or at least pronounced—"Parlez-vous," meaning, of course, "Do you speak [name of language]?"*

ARKANSAS TOOTHPICK: a large knife; specifically, a Bowie knife. (*Mexican War, Civil War, Indian Wars*)

ARMORED COW: canned condensed milk. (*World War II*)

ARMORED HEIFER: same as above.

ARMORED RATION: also, **armor ration**. *Civil War* — referred to the standard marching ration; *World War I* — emergency ration; *Civil War, Spanish-American War, World Wars I and II* — any ration in a can.

ARMY CHICKEN: beans and franks. (*World War II*)

ARMY STRAWBERRIES: prunes. (*World War II*)

AXLE GREASE: butter. (*World War II, Navy*)

BAGS OF MYSTERY: sausages. (*World War II*).

BALTIMORE STEAK: calf's liver. (*World War II, Navy*)

BAMBOO JUICE: wine. (*Army Air Force, World War II, South Pacific*)

BARK JUICE: bootleg liquor. (*Union, Civil War*)

BATTERY ACID: very strong coffee. (*World War II*)

B.C.: These initials, sometimes stamped on boxes of hardtack, stood for

"brigade commissary," but the soldiers were fond of saying it actually stood for the hardtack's date of being produced!

BEAN GUN: mobile kitchen. (*World Wars I and II*)

THE BIG PANTRY: military nickname for a local commissary. It has most frequently and famously applied to the commissary at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, starting in the 1960s. Used by all services, post-World War II.

BLACK SOUP: coffee. (*World War II*)

BLONDE AND SWEET: Today, when asked by a waitress how a man wants his coffee, this response might well get him slapped, or at least accused of boorishness, womanizing, sexism, male chauvinism, or all of the above. But during World War II, men in every service (although the Navy claims to have been the originator) found this a novel way of describing how they liked their coffee: that is, with sugar and cream. If the phrase was spoken to a blonde waitress, then it was an obvious means of flirting.

BLOOD: catsup; common military use. (*World War II*)

BONE: to study, to memorize, or become very familiar with. Usually used with *up*. "I have to *bone up* on my math." The term may well have originated with a nineteenth-century scholar named Bohn who wrote summaries of various texts so students would have an easier time understanding them.

BOUNCING GLASS: the white, nearly unbreakable military china. (*all services, World War II, Korea*)

BUBBLE DANCING: dishwashing. Use of this word was a way of making a dreary job sound a little more exotic. (*all services, World War II*)

BUG JUICE: Kool-Aid and other powder-based fruit drinks. (*World War II - present*)

BUMBOAT, BUM BOAT, BUMBOATERS, BUM BOATERS, and variations such as **BUM BOATSMEN, BUMBOAT WOMAN,** and

simply **BUMS**: peddlers in port; suppliers of various items to sailors aboard ship in port; the Navy version of a sutler, with a similarly unsavory reputation. These merchants utilized every imaginable type of small-to-medium-sized boat to make their way to the ships anchored in their local harbor. In a ship's home port, licensed bumboaters were often allowed to come aboard. In foreign ports, this was seldom permitted.

The bumboats were patronized by all the navies of the world as a way of making goods available to the men on their ships. This became more and more impractical as ships got larger, the main open decks consequently got further from the water, and the crews grew ever larger. After 1924, many years after the Navy established commissaries, ships' stores, and ships' stores ashore, the men of the U.S. Navy were no longer allowed to purchase from these vendors.

Most people today do not know what a bumboat was, but they were once familiar figures to the general public. In 1878, when "a Bumboat Woman of Portsmouth" [England] was one of the main characters in Gilbert and Sullivan's comic opera *H.M.S. Pinafore*, the playbill gave no explanation of her title; the audience was expected to know what a bumboat woman did.

Because of the continuing popularity of the works of Gilbert and Sullivan, this fictitious character, known both as Mrs. Cripps and as "Little Buttercup" (for reasons unknown, even to her), is probably the most famous bumboat operator of all time. Her prodigious stock list included snuff, tobacco, scissors, watches, knives, ribbons, laces, treacle, toffee, tea, coffee, chickens, conies [rabbit], and "excellent peppermint drops." She was allowed on deck (The *Pinafore* was anchored in its home port throughout the performance) so the audience never got to see her boat, but it must have been very large to carry such a stock assortment. Certainly, a real bumboat woman would have done a brisk business with such a stock list.

BUMMER: Contrary to popular belief, this term did not originate in the 1960s. It's from the 1860s, during the Civil War, and was used by southerners to describe a northern forager of the worst sort. A *bummer* was usually, but not necessarily, a soldier, often a straggler, who pillaged and plundered the countryside. His plunder included any type of food, especially eggs, poultry, and livestock.

BUST HEAD: bootleg liquor. (*South, Civil War*)

BUZZARD: chicken or turkey. (*World War II*)

B.X.: base exchange. (*Air Force, 1947 - present*)

CANNED COW: condensed, canned milk. (*World War I*)

CANNED WILLIE: corned beef hash. Used first by American Expeditionary Force in France. (*World War I*)

CANTEEN: Since the late 1800s, canteens have been places for military members to informally socialize. Various refreshments could be purchased there, from coffee and soft drinks to beer and hard liquor. The term has been used to describe most anyplace where the clientele is restricted exclusively to active-duty personnel, such as USO-sponsored welcome centers in airports, makeshift refreshment counters in the South Pacific, and the famous urban canteens of World Wars I and II.

Early on, canteens were located on post, financed by the men themselves, and included libraries or reading rooms. They provided safe and inexpensive alternatives to vice-filled centers of entertainment located off-post. Later, especially in wartime, various sponsors provided canteens, both on-and-off-post: city governments, the USO, the Red Cross, local church-

es and synagogues, veterans' organizations, and the Salvation Army were among the sponsors.

During the World Wars, canteens in large cities featured live entertainment and dancing. For that reason, often as not they were referred to as *clubs*, although the only membership requirement was that the patron be in uniform. Movie stars and radio personalities often volunteered to help out, contributing vastly to the men's morale and the canteen's allure. Starlets were, of course, the most popular, and often danced with the servicemen, while male stars were often relegated to waiting tables and talking with the men who were too shy (or too married) to ask a starlet to dance.

The most famous of these wartime canteens were the Stage Door Canteen in New York, and the Hollywood Canteen in Hollywood, California. The latter was founded by movie stars Bette Davis and John Garfield.

More recently, all sorts of establishments have been labeled *canteens* by their customers. These are located either on or off post, and range from pizza parlors to pool halls and bowling alleys. Most of them are not actually canteens other than in the traditional sense that they cater to service personnel and provide food, drink, and either recreation or entertainment. The Veterans Canteen Service (VCS) is the descendent of the World War II canteens.

CANTEEN MEDALS: shirt stains, usually from beer. (*World War I, all services*)

CAT BEER: milk. (*World War II, all services*)

CHICKENS: the silver eagle insignia on a colonel's shoulders. (*World War II, Army and Marine Corps*)

CHINA CLIPPER: a dishwasher. (*World War II, probably of Navy origin*)

CHOW: This synonym for food dates back to the arrival of many Chinese in the United States, who arrived for the California Gold Rush. It comes from the Mandarin term "ch'ao," which means to stir, fry, or cook. (*all services and all civilians, 1848 - present*)

The term spread throughout groups who had frequent contact with Chinese immigrants. This included railroad crews of the late 1860s working with Chinese "coolies," as well as San Francisco millionaires (many of whom had made fortunes during the gold rush) who hired Oriental cooks. This practice became widespread and fashionable—so much so that even the fictional Cartwrights, the ranchers of the Ponderosa on the 1960s hit television series *Bonanza*, had a Chinese cook (he was named Hop Sing). All those persons, both real and fictional, who ate the food produced by these cooks found themselves asking, "when's ch'ao?" or "what's for ch'ao?" whenever they were hungry.

CITY COW: canned milk. (*World War II, all services*)

COFFEE BOILER: This was a derogatory term for an infantryman, especially a straggler. The term originated because of the frequency with which tired soldiers fell out of line, boiled some coffee, and then—having become somewhat revived—hurried to catch up to their units. The term was used by Union artillerymen and cavalrymen during the Civil War—who, it should be remembered, didn't have to walk. (*Union Army, Civil War and later*)

COFFEE COOLER: Similar to *coffee boiler*, this is someone who loafs while others work—and doesn't necessarily hurry to catch up. The term dates back at least to the Spanish-American War, but it probably originated during the Civil War as a derivative of coffee boiler. The fictional Beetle

Bailey is probably America's most famous coffee cooler.

COFFEE GRINDER: a Gatling gun, or any of the other early, experimental machine guns. So named because it was powered by cranking, similar to the cranks on nineteenth century coffee grinders. (*Army, Spanish-American War*)

COLLISION MAT: pancakes or waffles. (*Navy, World War II*)

COOKIE: a cook. The term has received much wider use since the 1950s, when the cook named "Cookie" first appeared in the comic strip *Beetle Bailey*. (*All services, undetermined origin, probably at least as old as World War I*)

COOK'S POLICE: same as **K.P.**, **KITCHEN DETAIL**, and **KITCHEN POLICE**. (*Army, 1866-98*)

CRACKER: hardtack.

CRACKER JACK: late Victorian-era slang, civilian and military alike, for "first rate" or "the best." A few years later, this expression gave the famous snack product its name... a case of slang being used to name a product, rather than vice-versa. (*1880-1910*)

CREEPER: a soldier's frying pan. (*Army, Civil War*)

CROCK: Generally used by military and civilians alike, starting about the time of the Vietnam War, to describe anything disagreeable. Whereas a crock or crockpot was used to slow-cook stews and other foods, this slang crock was invariably filled with dung or manure: usually, expressed as "That's a crock of ----," or "what a crock of ----." "That's a crock" conveys the same message, albeit a tad more delicately.

DAIQUIRI: This was the name of the Cuban beach on which American troops landed in Cuba in 1898. Somehow, the name later became applied to a popular cocktail, probably because of its Caribbean ingredients, which include rum, lemon or lime juice, and sugar. (*civilian and military use, Spanish-American War to the present*)

D-BAR: a D-ration bar. Also called a "Logan Bar" for its developer, Capt. Paul Logan, head of the Subsistence School in Chicago. (*Army and Marine Corps, World War II*)

DEPTH BOMBS: Eggs that aren't stale enough to throw away—but they're not very fresh, and thus they cause some gastronomical distress. (*World War II, Navy*)

DEPTH CHARGES: aging eggs, same as above. Also, the name of a drink in which a shot glass filled with whiskey is dropped into a glass of beer. The whiskey stays on the bottom until the beer is drained, thus supplying the drinker with an explosion, of sorts, as he finishes the beer. This drink, or variations on the same theme, is sometimes called a "Boilermaker" (no connection with Purdue University, home of college sports' famous Boilermakers) by civilians. (*World War II, Navy*)

DESECRATED VEGETABLES: This play on words refers to desiccated vegetables. These dried, dehydrated vegetables kept well on the march but were unappealing to the eye, and most soldiers agreed they were also unappealing to eat. The play on words came naturally to anyone who had tasted them, upon being told their official name—especially since few knew what "desiccated" meant. (*Army and Marines, Civil War to present*)

DOG: description of hardtack, soaked overnight in water until it became a pulp. It was then mixed with molasses into a mush, and then fried. (*U.S. Merchant Marine, Spanish-American War*)

DOG BISCUIT: a traditional term for hardtack, later applied to crackers. (*Army, Civil War and after*)

DOG FOOD: corned beef hash. (*Army, World War II*)

DOUGHBOY: the typical American soldier, especially an infantry soldier. It's related to *dough foot*, from which it descended, and which it replaced in popular terminology. See "Dough Foot" reference for the explanation. (*Army, late 19th century through World War I, and even up to the early days of World War II*)

DOUGH FOOT: an infantry soldier. This term came from a nickname the cavalry gave to the Infantry during operations in the Southwest before 1900. Men who marched in certain areas of Texas and the Southwest tended to raise a lot of dust, and the dust was from adobe soil. Therefore, men with the dust covering their boots (and perhaps their entire uniform) were called *adobes* by the horsemen, who were perched far above the dust. Adobes got shortened to "dobies" and, eventually, that became *dough foot* or *dough boys*. Supplanted in popular slang by *doughboy*. (*civilian and military use, late nineteenth century—especially Spanish-American War—through World War I*)

DOUGHPUNCHER: a baker. (*Army, World War II*)

DOWNTOWN: a reference to the civilian sector; in the commissary business, this means supermarkets. Usually used when comparing product selection, quality, or prices with those available at the commissary. (*all services, World War II to present*)

E. P.: edible portion. (*all services, World War II to present*)

ELECTRIC COW: a machine for mixing powdered milk and water. (*all services, World War II*)

EMBALMED BEEF: canned beef that was spoiled, laced with chemical preservatives or disinfectants, or both. Early in the Spanish-American War, canned meat that had been treated with chemicals and then was left out in the sun on the docks at Tampa, Florida, stored in the sweltering holds of ships, or left steaming in the jungle heat ended up having the terrible combined smell of noxious chemicals and rotting flesh. It was embalmed beef that Teddy Roosevelt ordered thrown over the side of the transport he took to Cuba, and it was embalmed beef that inspired him to later say, "not one-tenth of the meat shipped to our troops in Cuba was fit to eat." (*Army, Spanish-American War*)

EYEWASH: garnishes. That is, anything that makes plain food look better, but has no nutritional value in itself. The terms "eyewash" and "garnishes" are also used to disparage all sorts of things that are made to look better than they actually are. (*World War II - present, commonly used in all services and among civilians*)

FIGHTIN' TOOLS: eating utensils. (*Army and Marines, World War II*)

FIRE CAKES: a crude flour and water concoction cooked on a heated stove or frying pan. (*Army and Marines, American Revolution*)

FISH: (singular or plural) — a torpedo. (*Navy, World War I and later*)

FISH EYES: tapioca. (*World War II*)

FLOUR TILE: hardtack. (*nineteenth century*)

FLY LIGHT: to miss a meal. (*Army Air Forces, World War II*)

GARBAGE CAN: a depth charge. More frequently called an *ash can* or *trash can*. (*Navy, World War I and later*)

GARLICS: enemy soldiers. Obvious reference to the Spanish use of garlic in their food. Used in much the same disparaging way the term *Krauts* was later used when referring to Germans. (*Army usage, Spanish-American War*)

GARNISHES: see *Eyewash*.

GAS BOMB: a stale egg, similar to "depth charge" and "depth bomb." (*Navy, pre-World War I*)

GEDUNK: sweets or dessert. (*Navy, World War I*)

G.I.: The origin of this term is one of those pieces of historical trivia that always inspires an interesting discussion and several theories. Some people claim it originated around the turn of the twentieth century with the water buckets that swung along under Army caissons and carts, and were stamped with “G.I.” for the material from which they were made: galvanized iron.

This seems awfully far-fetched, but whether or not it started there, most people agree that later it came to mean *garrison issue* and was applied to anything issued by the local garrison, from clothing to eating utensils. Later, it became *government issue* rather than garrison issue. A soldier in a full-dress uniform or on inspection was said to be “looking real G.I.” because absolutely everything about him had been issued by the garrison and was done according to regulations. The term was often used as a barb or an insult. The acronym was eventually applied to the typical American soldier—particularly a private.

G.I. as slang has also been used (1) as a verb, meaning “to scrub equipment clean.” “I want you to G.I. that garbage can!” (2) As an adjective, often derogatory, referring to someone who did everything strictly “by the book” and by regulation: “The new lieutenant is really G.I.” And, (3) as a noun, meaning a stomach or intestinal upset—from the term “Gastro-Intestinal.” “I’ve got a case of the G.I.s.” (*all services, World War II and after*)

G.I. CAN: a large metal container. The “G.I.” in this case stood for galvanized iron.

GOLDFISH: canned salmon. (*Indeterminate origin, but widely used in World War I*)

GOO: any kind of edible (more or less) hash. (*World War I*)

GOOBER PEAS: peanuts. (*Civil War*)

GRAPE and GRAPESHOT: a cluster of grape-sized cast iron balls, used in cannon at close range with devastating effect. The cannon literally became an oversized shotgun. When used against a charging enemy, entire rows of men were killed in a moment; when used against the open deck of a wooden ship, a tremendous amount of carnage resulted. (*Army and Navy, nineteenth century and earlier*)

GREASE POT: a cook. Also see **stew pot**. (*Army, Marines, World War I*)

GRINDERS: teeth. Also, any food that made the eater use his teeth a bit more than usual... so, tough meat, chewy bread, and so on could also be *grinders*. See **subs** or **submarine sandwich**. (*all services, since World War I at least*)

GROG: liquor, usually very strong rum that has been diluted with water. It was from the grog that a sailor’s daily rum ration was taken. (*term originated pre-Civil War*)

GRUB: This was a traditional, disparaging word for food in general. The term probably is an allusion to the primitive (or desperate) practice of digging for, and consuming, grubs. (*all services, goes back at least as far as the mid-nineteenth century*)

HAMBURGER: Besides actual hamburger, this term was used as slang to describe destroyed or damaged flesh in, or from, a battle wound. (*Army and Marines, World War II and later*)

HAND GRENADE: a pineapple. Also, any food (especially meat) that causes gastronomical distress. (*Army and Marines, World War II*)

HARDTACK: Originally, this was the official term for a baked mixture of flour and water. It was often softened by soaking overnight in cold

water, then fried in grease for breakfast. See “**skillygalee**.” It got awfully hard with age, and became petrified rather than brittle. See “**sheetiron crackers**” and “**tooth dullers**.” (*eighteenth and nineteenth centuries*)

One of the all-time classic anecdotes has to do with Union soldiers in their trenches during the siege of Petersburg. At that point in the war (1864-65), the Union men were well supplied and could afford to be fussy; they would crack open their hardtack at their posts, and if they found worms inside the crackers, they would toss them into the dirt. One day an officer saw a trench littered with the stuff and berated the men. “Don’t you know you’re not supposed to throw hardtack into the trenches?” he shouted. A soldier replied, “We’ve thrown it out of the trenches two or three times, sir, but it keeps crawling back.” In that regard, see “**worm castles**.”

After the Civil War, the term *hardtack* was also applied as a form of derision to any baked good that was hard or stale.

Hard Tack (two words) was also the name of a famous racehorse of the 1920s. Hard Tack was the sire of Seabiscuit and the grandsire of War Admiral, two superlative horses of the 1930’s. (See “**sea biscuit**” later in this listing.)

HASH: general, military and civilian use. Hash is now considered a proper word, acceptable to dictionaries and scrabble players, but was slang when originally used. Its origins are unclear, but it dates at least as far back as the nineteenth century and was commonly used among the military and blue-collar workers, particularly miners, railroad construction gangs, and cowboys.

Hash as food is “a dish of diced or chopped meat, as of leftover corned beef or ham, potatoes, and sometimes vegetables, sautéed in a frying pan; or, meat, potatoes, and vegetables, especially carrots, cooked together in a gravy.”

However, slang forms still exit, though they have nothing to do with food. *Hash* as a noun can be a mess (a bad situation) or a fight, as in “they got themselves into a real hash;” as a verb, it can mean to get into a disagreement or a fight (oral or physical), as in “they really hashed it out;” to subdue someone or to win a fight, as in “I sure settled his hash!” It can also mean simply to talk things over and come to an understanding, as in “we sat down and hashed it out.”

Hash is also slang for hashish. Both the term and the substance were in widespread use, military and civilian, during the Vietnam War, and probably for a decade afterward.

HASH BURNER: a cook. (*World War II, all services*)

HELL-FIRED STEW: also known as *hish* and *hash*. Pork or beef, tossed together with potatoes, tomatoes, garlic, crackers, and whatever else might be available, seasoned with pepper and salt, and stewed. (*Union army, Civil War*)

HIGH OCTANE: same as “**high test**.”

HIGH TEST: This term denoting high-octane gasoline can also refer to strong coffee—but not if it’s decaffeinated. (*military and civilian use, World War II and after*)

HOOCH: hard liquor. This is an Army term that comes from a home-concocted Eskimo liquor called *hoochino*. The term was picked up and shortened by soldiers who were sent to Alaska after the U.S.A. purchased that territory from Russia in 1867.

HOOVERIZE: to voluntarily ration foodstuffs. Originated with Herbert Hoover, who was at that time the head of the Food Administration. (*World*

War I, civilian origin)

IN A JAM and **IN A PICKLE**: to be in a tough or dangerous situation.

Also, see **"In a stew."** (*twentieth century, general use*)

IN A STEW: to be worried or in trouble. Also, see **"stew"** and **"stewed,"** the latter of which has a different meaning. (*twentieth century, general use*)

INK: coffee. (*all services, World War II*)

IRISH GRAPES: potatoes. (*all services, World War II*)

IRISH TURKEY: corned beef. (*all services, World War II*)

IRON BOTTOM: very strong coffee, so-called because it could corrode the iron bottom of the pot in which it was made. Also, **"Iron Bottom Coffee."** (*all services, World War II*)

IRON RATIONS: *Civil War* — term for the more-or-less official marching ration; *World War I* — the emergency ration; *World War II* — any food that came in a can and was eaten uncooked due to lack of time or facilities for cooking. Also see **"Armor Ration"** and **"Armored Ration."**

IRRITATED HAM: Irradiated ham (or bread, or cheese) used as food for astronauts from Apollo 12 to the present, and presently making inroads in military and civilian food.

JAM: A bad situation from which there is no easy escape. (*twentieth century, general use*)

JAMOKE: coffee. (*post-World War I*)

JAVA: same as above.

JOE: same as above.

JOHNNY CAKE: cornmeal pancakes. Also called *johnnie cake*, *jonny cake*, *journey cake*, and *shawnee-cake*. (*Union, Civil War*)

KENNEL RATIONS: meat loaf or hash. The slang term referred to a name brand of dog food. (*all services, World War II*)

KITCHEN DETAIL: same as K.P., *kitchen police*, and *cook's police*. (*all services*)

KITCHEN POLICE: see K.P.

K.P.: kitchen police. This refers to the lower order of kitchen-related duties—cleaning, dish washing, potato peeling, onion slicing. Although it does not seem to have originated from "keep peeling," as many enlisted have insisted, that usage has come into style as a part of the natural evolution of military lingo! (*all services, World War II and after*)

KRAUT: Short for sauerkraut, this could be any German person, military or civilian. (*all services and civilians used this term during World Wars I and II*)

LACHIE: milk; from the Spanish word for milk, *leche*. (*Navy, Spanish-American War*)

LAMP OIL: bootleg liquor. (*Union, Civil War*)

LEMON: Usually, something mechanical that doesn't work properly. Most often refers to an automobile or truck, but it can be applied to almost anything. Originated because of the sour taste—and the sour look on one's face—that a lemon can deliver. (*Common use, military and civilian, timeframe of origin unknown*)

LIBERTY CABBAGE: This was a reactionary way of referring to sauerkraut during World War I. It was also a juvenile way of denouncing the Germans, and as such it was a logical extension of the anti-German hysteria that gripped the nation in the early days of American participation in the war. Books in the German language were burned, Dachshunds were renamed *liberty pups*, German and Austrian music was shunned (no more concerts that included works by Beethoven, Bach, or Mozart), and, in some schools and colleges, the German language could not be studied or taught.

This all was foolish, and the latter was especially shortsighted, since translators are a necessity in times of war—if, for nothing else, to translate the enemy's intercepted messages, or to interrogate prisoners. Nonetheless, the use of the term "liberty cabbage" was widespread in the civilian sector, to the extent that it was actually used on restaurant menus. (*general use, 1917-18*)

LIBERTY FRIES: In 2003, this was an anti-French nickname for the ever-popular fried potatoes known in just about every fast-food franchise in the United States as french fries or, simply, as fries. Remarkably similar to the anti-German liberty cabbage and liberty pups of World War I, this jingoistic term was in widespread use for about three weeks during the American invasion of Iraq in 2003. It was the common man's way of taking a swipe at the French for not supporting American policies regarding Iraq. Disparaging jokes about the fighting ability of the French also abounded at this time; most people seemed to forget about Napoleon, the Foreign Legion, the Marquis de Lafayette, or the French alliance that had assured American independence. Fortunately, no one suggested renaming (or returning) the Statue of Liberty, which had been given to the United States by France, nor to rename French wines or perfumes, nor to boycott French fashion designers.

Predictably, this never caught on among most people, and "liberty fries" quickly became known once again as french fries, or simply fries. Ironically, making the liberty fries nickname particularly silly was the simple fact that the way french fries were cut and fried had actually not originated in France at all, but in Belgium.

LIMEY: This widespread twentieth century term for the British generally, and British sailors in particular, originated in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when British servicemen in the Caribbean were issued limes to help fight scurvy and tropical diseases. Ironically, the limes had replaced lemons, which were actually more effective in fighting scurvy than limes; lemons, it was later discovered, have higher doses of ascorbic acid (vitamin C).

The term was originally used disparagingly, and in its early use it was taken as an insult. Interestingly, the British often used it to insult each other. It is only infrequently used today, but it was very popular—especially among British, Canadian, and Australian servicemen—during World Wars I and II.

LOGAN BAR: a D-ration bar, named for its developer, Capt. Paul Logan, head of the Subsistence School in Chicago. Also called, simply, a "D-bar." (*Army, World War II*)

LOST SHEEP: This commissary slang is sometimes used by civilian supermarkets. Its origins are unknown. It describes any item taken from its proper display area by a shopper, who later changes his mind about purchasing it and places it on the nearest available shelf. Since they are improperly stocked, all the lost sheep must later be retrieved by store personnel and returned to their proper places. The term "orphan" is a synonym.

MACHINE OIL: syrup. (*all services, World War II*)

MARFAK: butter. Marfak was the trade name of a lubricating oil of that period. (*World War II*)

MARGE: margarine. (*all services, World War II*)

MEATBALL: during World War II, all U.S. services used this term to describe a Japanese aircraft. It originated due to the red "rising sun" insignia on the wings and fuselage.

MEATBALLS: the signal lights on aircraft carrier decks that signal a pilot as to whether or not his landing approach is safe. If it is, two red lights in the center of the display signal an “OK to land;” if not, a large display of red lights (the ‘meatballs’) signal him to not land but to instead re-try his approach. (*modern usage, Navy*)

MEAT CAN: a soldier’s mess kit. (*Civil War, Indian Wars, Spanish-American War, World War I*)

MEAT GRINDER: a battle or situation that is extremely dangerous and bloody. (*Army and Marine Corps usage in Korea, Vietnam, and later*)

MEAT WAGON: an ambulance; sometimes, a hearse. (*Army and Marine Corps, traditional*)

MESS: This doesn’t refer to the conditions of the dining area (or the condition of the meal). It probably comes from the Spanish *mesa*, meaning table, or the related word *meso*, which is an Italian term for a single course at a meal. Accordingly, the large rooms in which military personnel eat became known as “mess halls.”

MONKEY MEAT: inferior, tough beef. This traditional Army term apparently originated with French soldiers in World War I, who received canned beef shipped from Madagascar. It had a peculiar taste and was pretty well disliked by all who tasted it. Since it came from a far-off “jungle isle,” the term “monkey meat” seemed appropriate.

MOO JUICE: milk. (*all services, and many civilians, World War II*)

MRE: this was the official acronym for Meal, Ready to Eat in the 1980s and 1990s, during the Gulf War, in the U.S. mission in Somalia, in the War in Iraq (aka the second Gulf War), and afterwards. Soldiers, Marines and Airmen often said the initials really stood for “Meals Rejected by Everybody.” The unkind, insensitive, politically incorrect, but graphically descriptive version was “Meals Rejected by Ethiopians,” a crude reference to contemporary famines in Ethiopia.... the implication being that even someone starving to death wouldn’t eat those rations.

MUD: coffee; also used to describe chocolate pudding. (*World War II*)

NOT WORTH HIS SALT: This phrase dates at least from the time of the Roman Empire (and maybe earlier), when soldiers in the field were often paid in salt, which was useful in seasoning food and in treating wounds. Soldiers far from home considered this necessary and desirable element to be of great value. Any soldier “not worth his salt” was not worth the salary he received. In other words, he was lazy, cowardly, worthless, or generally a bum. (*common use*)

NUKE: used as a verb, this is the act of heating or reheating food in a microwave oven. (*general military and civilian use, 1980s-present*)

NUCLEAR COFFEE: a mix of water and the cocoa, coffee, creamer and sugar found in an MRE and served in a canteen cup. (*Gulf War, 1991*)

OH BE JOYFUL or O! BE JOYFUL!: any homemade liquor. (*Union and Confederate, Civil War*)

OLD RED EYE: bootleg liquor, so named for its morning-after effects. Civil War, primarily among southerners, or men of either side fighting in the western theatre—that is, near the Mississippi River.

OLD SALT: an old or experienced sailor. (*Navy, traditional*)

ORPHAN: same as “lost sheep.”

PEARL DIVING: It sounds great, but it’s just a fancy way of saying “dishwashing.” (*World War II, all services*)

PICKLED: drunk, drowned, or dead and embalmed. All three possibilities were used by all services from the War of 1812 (and perhaps earlier) to

the present. The past usage probably comes from the British Navy’s practice of “pickling” the body of a deceased admiral or other high-ranking official for his return to Great Britain. Often, a barrel of the crew’s rum ration was used for the purpose—a practice that was tremendously unpopular among the sailors! Also see, “In a Pickle.”

PICKLED IN BRINE: drowned. (*Navy, traditional*)

PINEAPPLE: an American hand grenade. (*used by Army and Marines, World War II and after*)

POP SKULL: bootleg liquor. (*North and South, Civil War*)

PORK BARRELL: Although it’s now a political term denoting pet legislation or projects that garner federal dollars for a senator’s state or a congressman’s district, it actually originated in the eighteenth century Army and Navy as a straightforward description of a barrel for salt pork.

POT: a helmet; often, “Steel Pot.” Soldiers often used their helmets to heat or boil water. Used during World War I and after. During the Vietnam War, “pot” could also mean Marijuana, of course.

POTATO MASHER: U.S. Army slang for a German hand grenade during World War II.

PUNK: bread. (*pre-World War I, all services*)

P.X.: post exchange. (*Army, World War II and after*)

RABBIT FOOD: greens, especially lettuce. (*World War I*).

RED LEAD: catsup. (*World War II*)

RED PAINT: same as “red lead.”

REDEYE: same as “red lead” and “red paint.” Also, any strong or homemade liquor. (*Civil War to World War II*)

REPEATERS: sausages—either because they’re strung one after another, or because they try to come back after being eaten, or because they caused gas! (*World War II*)

ROLLING KITCHEN: a portable kitchen. That is, a vehicle or trailer that included all the basics necessary for cooking meals near the battlefront—stoves, sinks, pots, pans, and even some type of refrigerator were the usual items attached. It is a close relative of the “Bean Gun.” (*Army and Marines, used especially during World Wars I and II*)

SALT HORSE: pickled or salted beef. The stuff was so bad that men decided it just had to be the remains of an old horse, and not beef at all. It was often this stuff that was given a “funeral” and was buried rather than eaten, in full sight of the company officers. (*both sides, Civil War*)

SALT JUNK: salt pork. (*Union army, Civil War*)

SAMMY: traditionally, this was syrup. However, it could also mean “Doughboys” or Americans during World War I, especially for those southern soldiers who balked at being called Yanks. Thus, the song “Over There” was often sung, “The Sammies are coming” rather than “The Yanks are coming.” During the Gulf War (1991), “Sammy” took on a decidedly different meaning: it referred to Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi dictator. Yet it was seldom used during the Iraq War of 2003.

SAND: sugar. (*Navy, World War I*)

SAND BITER: an American soldier in the Gulf War, 1991. (*Army usage*)

SAUSAGE: an observation balloon. (*World War I*)

SCOUSE: hardtack or ship’s biscuit soaked in leftover soup. (*Army and Navy, pre-1900*)

SCRAMBLED EGGS: Like “chickens,” this has nothing to do with food; it is a term used to describe the decorations on an officer’s cap brim during and after World War II.

SCULLERY: where dishes are washed on a ship. (*traditional, Navy*)

SCUTTLEBUTT: today, it means news, gossip, rumor or hearsay, as in, "What's the latest scuttlebutt?"

The term originated in the early U.S. Steel Navy, built in the 1880's, 1890s, and 1900s. On those ships, water coolers/drinking fountains were often placed on the decks near the "scuttles," the chutes down which coal would be loaded into the ship's bunkers. That was the origin of the *scuttle* portion of the term.

In the 100-degree heat that was commonplace below decks, sailors would often refresh themselves at the fountains, sitting on their behinds (thus, the "butt" portion of the term), while they took their breaks, trading the latest news, rumor, and gossip. Such activity around a water cooler or coffee maker remains commonplace in all professions, but the combined term "scuttlebutt" actually comes to us from the U.S. Navy of 1890-1900.

SEA COW: canned milk or milk-dispensing machine. (*Navy, World War II*)

SEA BISCUIT: a Navy roll or biscuit; also, the Navy version of hardtack. Like the Army version, sea biscuits were hard and unpalatable, but they had the advantage of never spoiling—unless you considered as "spoilage" the mold, weevils, or maggots they tended to collect as the voyage wore on. Hungry sailors cut off in mid-ocean from fresh provisions couldn't afford to be fussy. If the biscuits were afflicted, the men tended to eat them in the dark, and tried not to think about what they were consuming.

Sea biscuits, like hardtack, had the reputation of being hard as rock and dangerous to teeth. If thrown, they were a danger to anything, according to a popular World War II ditty, still sung by kids at summer camps:

The biscuits in the Navy they say are mighty fine;

One rolled off a table and killed a friend of mine

Oh, I don't want no more of Navy life!

Gee ma, I want to go —

Oh, how I want to go —

Gee ma, I want to go home!

As one word (Seabiscuit), it was the name of the beloved and famous champion thoroughbred horse that was the grandson of the equally famous Man o' War, and the son of a horse named for the Army's infamous cracker, Hard Tack (*see above*). Seabiscuit captivated the country's attention in 1937-1940, was regarded as the champion of the downtrodden, and was the greatest money-winner of his day. Seven horses he sired were known collectively as "the little biscuits." Seabiscuit died in 1947 at the young age of fourteen.

In addition to his name, Seabiscuit had three other connections with the military: (1) His owner, Charles M. Howard, was a veteran cavalryman who had volunteered for the Spanish-American War. (2) During World War II, an American bomber in the Pacific theater bore the horse's name and likeness as its "nose art," and flew numerous missions. The plane was famous for its longevity. (3) when word spread that Howard had sent some of Seabiscuit's horseshoes to the crew of the plane, he found himself answering requests for more horseshoes from the crews of other aircraft, who wanted them as good luck charms.

SEA BREAD: Usually this was the equivalent of sea biscuit or ship's biscuit. It could also be shaped like a cracker rather than a biscuit, so sometimes it was the seagoing twin of hardtack.

SEA DUST: salt. (*Navy, traditional*)

SHEETIRON CRACKERS: hardtack. (*Union and Confederate armies, Civil War*)

SHINY CANS: canned troop issue foods.

SHIP'S BISCUIT: usually, either a hard biscuit or hard cracker served aboard ship. See "hardtack," "sea biscuit," and "sea bread."

S--- ON A SHINGLE: see "S.O.S."

SKILLYGALEE: hardtack, soaked in water, drained, and fried in pork fat. (*Union Army, Civil War*)

SLOP CHEST: a shipboard canteen, or any other kind of shipboard store owned and run by the crew. (*Navy, traditional, particularly nineteenth century*)

SLUM and SLUMGULLION: any meat stew. (*Army, traditional*)

SLUM CANNON: a mobile cooking stove. (*Army, World War I*)

SLUM DIVER: a soldier who is eating, particularly stew, and usually with gusto; he is diving right in. (*World War II*)

SLUM WAGON: a World War II version of the slum cannon.

SNAKE EYES: tapioca. (*World War I*)

S.O.S.: the polite way of saying "S--- on a Shingle," which was creamed chipped beef on toast, served to all branches of the service during World War II, as well as in countless school lunchrooms, diners, beaneries, greasy spoons, public cafeterias, and restaurants ever since!

Of course, S.O.S. is also the name of a famous pre-soaped pad, invented by Ed Cox in 1917 for scrubbing pots and pans. His wife coined the acronym to mean "Save Our Saucepans." Since it was wartime and people were being encouraged to conserve on just about everything, many consumers thought the name meant "Save On Soap!" The military, however—as well as civilians dining in cafeterias—has always used the acronym to identify the dish described above.

SOUP CANNON: same as "slum cannon." (*Army, World War I*)

SOWBELLY: salt pork. (*Army, Civil War and Indian Wars*)

SPAM: short for "spiced ham," this was the actual name of a product developed by the Hormel Company in 1936. Today the product is still on the market, but its name is often used as a slang term for any canned meat.

It is also used derogatorially for uncanned meat of poor quality. As slang, the term has been used by just about everybody in the United States ever since World War II and after. Today it also has acquired a completely different connotation, used by the military and the civilian world alike to denote the equivalent of junk mail and other unwanted solicitations that arrive over the Internet.

As mentioned in the text, President Eisenhower "pardoned" the Hormel company for sending so much of it to the troops during World War II. In then 1970s, a famous British television comedy routine by Monty Python's Flying Circus once centered on the many dishes that could be made using Spam, ranging from the mundane "Scrambled Eggs and Spam" to the far-more-exotic "Spam, Spam, Spam, Spam, and Spam."

In all fairness, it should be remembered that the original Spam helped the Allies win World War II by keeping soldiers—particularly the Russians—from starving. Former Russian Premier Nikita Khrushchev, who had commanded the Russian army at Stalingrad, credited Spam for helping the USSR win World War II by keeping his soldiers well-fed.

SPAM IN A CAN: a dead body in a tank, submarine, aircraft, spacecraft, or other enclosed metal vehicle. This irreverent term was inspired by the famous (or infamous, depending upon your point of view) Spam meat product in a can that was distributed to soldiers of all Allied armies in great

quantities during World War II.

SPICE THE MAIN BRACE: to drink whiskey. (*Navy, traditional*)

SPOON UP: to clean up or put in order. Apparently this term originated in the nineteenth century at the U.S. Military Academy (West Point), where all were expected to finish their food. Thus, once you had spooned up all your food, you would be ready to leave the table; in other circumstances, once you had “spooned up” whatever you were supposed to, all would be in order, and you would be ready to go to the next task.

SPUD: a potato; also. During the 1991 Gulf War, spud was a derogatory term for an Iraqi SCUD missile; like a peeled potato in a mess hall, they usually seemed to be haphazardly flung. (Unfortunately, the one SCUD that actually hit a U.S. base tragically killed numerous Army Quartermaster personnel in their tent.)

SQUARE MEAL: while just about everybody uses the term nowadays, it seems to have originated with the British and American navies of the eighteenth century (and possibly earlier). Since ships toss about on the high seas, sitting down at a mess table can be an adventure. To keep the plates, bowls, and cutlery in their places, and stop them from sliding down (or off) the table, they were placed inside wooden squares from one to two inches in height. These were, essentially, trays that each man placed at this spot on the table. As the practice became more widespread, these squares were permanently attached to the tables of some ships.

STEAM SHOVEL: a manual potato peeler. (*all services, World War II*)

STEEL POT: a helmet. (*all services, World War II and after*)

STEW: to think, mull over, try to figure things out. Also see “In a stew.” (*general use, twentieth century*)

STEWED: to be intoxicated. Also see “stew” and “in a stew.” (*common use, of indeterminate origin*)

STEW POT: like “grease pot” and “cookie,” this referred to a military cook. “Stew Pot” was also the nickname of a character in the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical *South Pacific*, and thus has probably received wider use since the 1950s. (*World War II and after*)

SUB or SUBMARINE: a long sandwich, placed in a long roll shaped generally like a submarine. The sandwiches were popular among industrial workers for lunch; made by vendors or contractors, the sandwiches were filling and contained everything the customer could want. Each one was a meal on a roll. (*general use, World War II and after*)

Originally they were known known as “grinders,” because you had to really chew to get through the roll. They became known as submarine sandwiches, or *subs*, during World War II because of their shape and their popularity among the submarine construction workers at Groton, Connecticut. The workers consumed an average of five hundred per day.

The sandwiches were, and are, actually known by many other names. Because of their sheer size they look like something only a he-man could eat, so they are sometimes called “Heroes” or simply “Hero sandwiches.” “Hoagies” is a popular term popular in Pennsylvania because of the sandwiches’ similar popularity among shipbuilders at Hog Island, in that state. In the south they are often called “poor boys” because vendors once gave them away free to depression-era workers in Louisiana who were on strike. (Source: The History Channel, “Sandwiches.”)

SUBMARINE SHARK: salmon or canned fish. (*Navy, World War II*)

SUTLER: This word, although not slang, is obscure enough to be listed here. It is probably Dutch in origin, from either the word *soetelen* or, more

probably, *soeteler*. In America, during and before the nineteenth century, it was used to refer to a civilian merchant selling non-ration goods to an Army, usually at high prices.

Sutlers have existed from the earliest recorded military campaigns of ancient times to the present. The American army inherited them and their practice from the colonial armies of European colonizers—including France, Holland, Spain, and Sweden—but mostly the Americans inherited the practice from the British army and the army of merchants that catered to it. Their sea-going counterparts were known as bum boat men and women—“bumboat men” and “bumboat women,” or, simply, “bumboaters.” See “bumboat.”

In the American experience, sutlers were generally despised. A few bad ones were enough to ruin the reputation of all, and there were more than a few who charged high prices for goods of questionable worth. This seemed especially true during the Civil War, and it was no coincidence that they were done away with in the United States shortly after the war. They were replaced by post traders (essentially the traders were sutlers by another name), who in turn were done away with in 1893.

The word *soetelen* would certainly have been more appropriate for some sutlers than others. Jim Hancock—who wrote of sutlers in “The Army Commissary System” for *Troop Support Digest* (Summer, 1984)—said it means “to undertake low offices.” On the other hand, according to David Starbuck, writing in “Commerce of War: Inside a Colonial Merchant’s House” in *Archaeology* (July-August 2007), *soeteler* means simply “a modest vendor,” with the word “modest” referring to the type, limited number, and the quality of the goods they sold, as well as the amount of money they usually made. Still, some of these “modest” sutlers became handsomely well-off.

SWAMP SEED: rice. (*Army and Marine Corps, World War II*)

TAR WATER: bootleg liquor. (*Civil War, Union*)

TEA KETTLE: the nuclear reactor on a submarine. (*Navy, modern use*)

TIN CAN: a submarine or a destroyer, particularly (but not necessarily) an enemy destroyer. (*Navy, World War II and after*)

TIN COW: canned milk. (*all services, World War II*)

TIRE PATCH: a pancake. (*Army and Marine Corps, World War II*)

TOOTH DULLERS: originally, this term applied to hardtack crackers, probably by men in both the Union and Confederate Armies during the Civil War. However, the term has been applied to any number of other items, particularly tough meat, the occasional stones that used to be found fairly regularly in bread and other ground wheat products, and even the buckshot that would occasionally be found in wild game.

TOOTH GRINDERS: usually, the same as “tooth dullers.” Also see “grinders.”

TRASH CAN: a depth charge. Also called “ash can” and “garbage can.” (*Navy, World War I and later*)

UNLEADED: decaffeinated coffee. (*general civilian and military use, Vietnam War and later*)

WORM CASTLES: hardtack, sea biscuits, bread, crackers, or any baked goods that were infested with maggots or similar vermin. Supposedly the term originated with the Union and Confederate Armies and Navies of the Civil War, but it is likely to be much older.

WEEVIL: shipboard rice, so named because it was often infested with weevils. (*traditional, Navy*)

Commissary & Subsistence Leadership, 1775 - 2008

COMMISSARY & SUBSISTENCE LEADERSHIP, 1775-2005

Commissary General and

Commissary Generals of Purchases, 1775-1780

Col. Joseph Trumbull, Commissary General:

31 July 1775 – 17 June 1777

Col. Joseph Trumbull, Commissary General of Purchases:

18 June 1777 – 4 Aug 1777

Col. William Buchanan, Commissary General of Purchases:

5 Aug 1777 – 20 March 1778

Col. Jeremiah Wadsworth, Commissary General of Purchases:

9 April 1778 – 10 Oct 1779

Col. Ephraim Blaine, Commissary General of Purchases:

12 Jan 1780 – 10 July 1781

Quartermaster Generals, 1775 - 1962

Col. Thomas Mifflin¹ 14 August 1775 - 16 May 1776

Col. Stephen Moylan 5 June 1776 - 27 September 1776

Col. Thomas Mifflin 28 September 1776 - 7 November 1777

Maj. Gen. Nathaniel Greene 2 March 1778 - 26 July 1780

Col. Timothy Pickering 5 August 1780 - 25 July 1785²Samuel Hodgdon³ 4 March 1791 - 19 April 1792James O'Hara³ 19 April 1792 - 30 May 1796John Wilkins, Jr.³ 1 June 1796 - 16 March 1802Brig. Gen. Morgan Lewis⁴ 4 April 1812 - 2 March 1813

Brig. Gen. Robert Swartout 21 March 1813 - 29 April 1816

Col. George Gibson (South Division)⁵ 29 April 1816 - 14 April 1818Col. James Mullaney (North Division)⁵ 29 April 1816 - 14 April 1818Brig. Gen. Thomas S. Jesup⁶ May 8 1818 - June 10, 1860

Brig. Gen. Joseph E. Johnston 28 June 1860 - 22 April 1861

Brig. Gen. Montgomery C. Meigs⁷ 15 May 1861 - 6 Feb 1882

Brig. Gen. Daniel H. Rucker 13-23 February 1882

Brig. Gen. Rufus Ingalls 23 February 1882 - 1 July 1883

Brig. Gen. Samuel B. Holabird 1 July 1883 - 16 June 1890

Brig. Gen. Richard N. Batchelder 26 June 1890 - 27 July 1896

Brig. Gen. Charles G. Sawtelle 19 August 1896 - 16 February 1897

Brig. Gen. George H. Weeks 16 February 1897 - 3 February 1898

Brig. Gen. Marshall I. Ludington 3 February 1898 - 13 April 1903

Brig. Gen. Charles F. Humphrey 12 April 1903 - 1 July 1907

Maj. Gen. James B. Aleshire⁸ 1 July 1907 - 12 September 1916Maj. Gen. Henry G. Sharpe 13 September 1916 - 12 July 1918⁹Maj. Gen. Harry L. Rogers 22 July 1918 - 27 August 1922⁹

Maj. Gen. William H. Hart 28 August 1922 - 2 January 1926

Maj. Gen. B. Franklin Cheatham 3 January 1926 - 17 January 1930

Maj. Gen. John L. DeWitt 3 February 1930 - 2 February 1934

Maj. Gen. Louis H. Bash 3 February 1934 - 31 March 1936

Maj. Gen. Henry Gibbins 1 April 1936 - 31 March 1940

Lt. Gen. Edmund B. Gregory 1 April 1940 - 31 January 1946

Maj. Gen. Thomas B. Larkin 1 February 1946 - 21 March 1949

Maj. Gen. Herman Feldman 21 March 1949 - 28 September 1951

Maj. Gen. George A. Horkan 5 October 1951 - 31 January 1954

Maj. Gen. Kester L. Hastings 5 February 1954 - 31 March 1957

Maj. Gen. Andrew T. McNamara 12 June 1957 - 12 June 1961

Maj. Gen. Webster Anderson 12 June 1961 - 31 July 1962¹⁰

Sources on the Quartermaster General:

Dr. Steve Anders, Quartermaster Historian, discussion with Dr. Peter Skribunt, DeCA Historian, 2 Oct 2003.

Erna Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army: A History of the Corps, 1775-1939*. Washington: Historian's Office, Office of the Quartermaster General, 1962.Quartermaster Museum/Quartermaster Foundation Web site, www.quartermasterfound.com, accessed on 1 Aug 2007.

Notes:

(The majority of these are from the Quartermaster Museum/Quartermaster Foundation Web site)

1 — The office of the Quartermaster General was established by resolution of the Continental Congress on June 16, 1775, but the position was not filled until August 14, 1775. Mifflin's term was not continuous. He resigned in May 1776, and Col. Stephen Moylan was appointed in his place. After Moylan's resignation in October 1776, Mifflin was persuaded by Congress and Gen. George Washington to resume his duties. After Mifflin resigned again, in November 1777, the post remained vacant until Greene's appointment on March 1778. The rank shown for Mifflin and his successors is that given at the end of the tour of duty as quartermaster general.

2 — The Quartermaster General's Department was abolished July 25, 1785, as the Army downsized.

3 — The Quartermaster provided by law of 1791 was considered a civilian. The law stated, "The Quartermaster shall be entitled to the same pay, rations, and forage as the lieutenant colonel commandant of a regiment." Both Hodgdon and O'Hara served under the terms of this legislation. The title "quartermaster general" was revived in 1796, but disappeared again until the legislation of 1802. Wilkins seems to have been a civilian until almost the end of his term of office. The record of his actual appointment to the rank of major general is not clear; some authorities list him without rank.

4 — The title of quartermaster general was revived by act of March 28, 1812, which also officially established a quartermaster's regiment.

5 — An act of April 24, 1816, authorized a quartermaster general, with the rank of colonel, for each of the two military divisions into which the United States was divided. Thus, there were two quartermaster generals in 1816-1818, because these were field assignments and there was a geographical distribution of duties. An act of April 14, 1818, did away with the quartermaster generals of divisions and provided for one quartermaster general with the rank of brigadier general.

6 — Jesup was "the Father of the Quartermaster Corps" and died on the job.

7 — There is some confusion about the exact date of Meigs' appointment. Some authorities give it as June 13, 1861. Meigs held the brevet rank of major general during most of the Civil War.

8 — The Army appropriation act of 1912 consolidated the Quartermaster, Subsistence and Pay Departments into a new Quartermaster Corps. At this point the quartermaster general was in charge of the Army's sales and issue commissaries. The title of quartermaster general was for a time discontinued in favor of the designation "Chief of the Quartermaster Corps," but the old title was revived by the Army Appropriation act of 1914.

9 — The official list of quartermaster generals does not include Maj. Gen. George W. Goethals, who was the officially designated acting quartermaster general and direct-

ing head of the Corps from Dec. 19, 1917, to May 9, 1918, nor Brig. Gen. Robert E. Wood, who was officially designated as acting quartermaster general from May 9, 1918, to the end of World War I.

10 — The list ends here because the office of the Quartermaster General did not exist between 1962 and 1981. Responsibilities for Army commissaries were transferred to the Army Subsistence Center in Chicago in 1962, and by the time the Quartermaster General's Office had been reestablished, Army commissaries were being run by the U.S. Army Troop Support Agency.

Commissary Generals Of Subsistence, 1818-1912

Col. George Gibson	18 April 1818 - 29 September 1861 (died)
Brig. Gen. Joseph P. Taylor	29 September 1861 - 29 June 1864
Brig. Gen. Amos B. Eaton	29 June 1864 - 29 June 1874 (retired)
Brig. Gen. Alex E. Shiras	23 June 1874 - 14 April 1875
Brig. Gen. Robert Macfeely	14 April 1875 - 1 July 1890 (retired)
Brig. Gen. B. DuBarry	10 July 1890 - 4 December 1892 (retired)
Brig. Gen. J. P. Hawkins	22 December 1892 - 29 Sept 1894 (retired)
Brig. Gen. M. R. Morgan	8 October 1894 - 1905
Henry G. Sharpe	1905-1912

Note: Lucius Northrup was head of the Confederate Subsistence Bureau during the Civil War.

Sources: Maj. John W. Barriger, *Legislative History of the Subsistence Department of the United States Army from June 16, 1775 to August 15, 1876*. (2nd ed.) Washington: Government Printing Office, 1877; Samuel T. Cushing, "Subsistence Department: Splendid Record of the Personnel of the Corps," in *Army and Navy Register*, 7 Sept 1895; Erna Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army: A History of the Corps, 1775-1939*. Washington: Quartermaster Historian's Office, Office of the Quartermaster General, 1962.

Chief, Army Commissary Operations

From 1962 to 1972, the person directly in charge of the Army's commissaries had the title "Chief of Army Commissary Operations." Presently, the only confirmed name known for that position, with that title, is that of Lt. Gen. Joseph M. Heiser, Jr., in 1971. More research on the holders of this office is pending.

Commanders of the U. S. Army Troop Support Agency (TSA)

Maj. Gen. John D. McLaughlin	May 1972 - Mar 1973
Maj. Gen. D. Van Lydegraf	March 1973 - Jul 1973
Brig. Gen. J. C. McWhorter Jr.	July 1973 - July 1974
Maj. Gen. Emmett W. Bowers	July 1974 - August 1978
Brig. Gen. Leo A. Brooks	August 1978 - June 1981
Brig. Gen. Eugene L. Stillions Jr.	June 1981 - January 1984
Brig. Gen. James S. Hayes	January 1984 - September 1989
Brig. Gen. Charles E. St. Arnaud	September 1989 - June 1991
Col. Bill G. Belcher	June 1991 - September 1991

Officers in Charge, Commanding Officers, and Commanders of the Navy Ships Store Office (NSSO), 1946-1969 Navy Resale System Office (NRSO), 1969-1979, and Navy Resale and Services Support Office (NAVRESSO), 1979-1991

(Source: *Navy Commissary Program ... A Commemoration*. Navy Exchange Command, September 1991.)

Note: Under NRSO and NAVRESSO, there was often a commander of the Commissary Store Division, who answered to the NRSO or NAVRESSO commander. However, the identities of only a few of these division commanders are presently known. Research continues in an attempt to complete the list of commanders in that position.

Officers in Charge

Capt. T. L. Becknell Jr.	April 1946 - August 1948
Rear Adm. A. A. Antrim	August 1948 - June 1950
Capt. J. L. Herlihy	June 1950 - November 1951
Rear Adm. J. L. Herlihy	November 1951 - December 1951
Cmdr. A. T. Magnell	December 1951 - January 1952
Capt. A. T. Magnell	January 1952 - December 1953

Commanding Officers

Capt. A. T. Magnell	December 1953 - June 1955
Cmdr. H. C. Thiele	June 1955 - August 1955
Capt. J. G. O'Handley	August 1955 - September 1957
Cmdr. R. W. Sauer	September 1957 - July 1959
Capt. R. W. Sauer	July 1959 - August 1960
Capt. J. J. Appleby	August 1960 - June 1964
Rear Adm. J. J. Appleby	July 1964 - April 1965
Rear Adm. C. A. Blick	April 1965 - August 1968
Capt. E. J. Morrissey	August 1968 - October 1968
Rear Adm. D. H. Lyness	October 1968 - June 1971
Capt. A. L. Borchers	June 1971 - July 1971
Rear Adm. J. G. Schoggen	July 1971 - June 1975
Cmdr. Bill Wolfe, director, Commissary Store Division*	December 1971
Rear Adm. E. M. Kocher	June 1975 - June 1978
Capt. W. G. Caliman Jr.	June 1978 - July 1978
Rear Adm. W. J. Ryan	July 1978 - July 1979

Commanders

Rear Adm. W. J. Ryan	August 1979 - July 1981
Rear Adm. D. E. Wilson	July 1981 - July 1987
Rear Adm. R. K. Squibb	July 1987 - January 1990
Rear Adm. H. D. Weatherson	January 1990 - September 1991

* — As with the chief of Army Commissary Operations, research is pending on the holders of this office in the Navy.

Heads of the Marine Corps Commissaries:

HQ USMC Installations And Logistics Department, Facilities And Services Division, Services Branch, Commissary Stores Section (LFS-1) Garrison Property, Food Services and Commissaries belonged to the Services Branch. The Division head was a brigadier general; the head of the Services Branch was originally a colonel, but the position was later civilianized; the commissary section head was always a civilian. (As of 1974, the U.S. Marine Corps Commissary Stores Branch was subordinate to the Services Division of the Marine Corps Quartermaster.)

Brig Gen W. P. Battell , HQMC/Commissary Stores	? - 1957 - ?
Lewis Clouser , MC Commissary Stores Branch	1966 - ?
John A. Davis	? - 1975
Cecil E. Saunders	1975 - 1984
Joseph H. Jeu (<i>commissary program manager/ head of commissary section</i>)	1984 - 1987
Pamela LaRue (<i>commissary program manager</i>)	1987 - 1988
Patrick Nixon (<i>commissary program manager/ head of commissary section</i>)	1988 - 1989
Joseph H. Jeu (<i>simultaneously, head of the Service Branch and the commissary section, while Patrick Nixon went to the Jones Commission and then to the DeCA Transition Team.</i>)	1989 - 1991

Commanders of the Air Force Commissary Service (AFCOMS), 1976-1991

Maj. Gen. Daniel L. Burkett	April 1976 - October 1978
Maj. Gen. Charles E. Woods	November 1978 - January 1982
Maj. Gen. George C. Lynch	January 1982 - September 1984
Brig. Gen. M. Gary Alkire	September 1984 - January 1985
Maj. Gen. M. Gary Alkire	February 1985 - December 1989
Maj. Gen. Robert F. Swarts	December 1989 - August 1991
Col. James H. Scott	August 1991 - September 1991

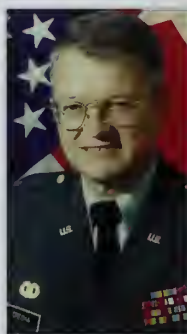
Directors of the Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA), 1990-2008

Biographical Information

Army Maj. Gen. John P. Dreska Director: May 1990 - November 1992

DeCA'S FIRST director was Maj. Gen. John P. Dreska, U.S. Army. He was tabbed as the director of the DeCA Transition Team in 1990, and remained as director once the agency was officially up and running in October 1991.

As a boy, Dreska had worked in his father's grocery store in Yonkers, New York, but it was many years before he became head of the military's grocery stores. In between, he graduated from Notre Dame University with a bachelor's degree in economics, and earned a master's degree in business



Army Maj. Gen.
John P. Dreska

administration at Tulane University. Other schooling included the Quartermaster basic and advanced courses, the Armed Forces Staff College, the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, and the CAPSTONE General Officer Course.

After joining the Army in 1960, he served in a wide variety of assignments from the United States to overseas tours in Japan, Vietnam, Korea, and Germany. He commanded a maintenance battalion in Korea; was a company commander in the first Training Regiment at Fort Dix, N.J.; served as chairman of the Army's Materiel Development and Readiness Command's Materiel Readiness Reorganization Coordinating Group, Alexandria, Va.; was staff officer for the director of plans in the Office of the deputy chief of staff for logistics in Washington, D.C.; commander of the 6th Support Center, 19th Support Command, in Korea; commander, New Cumberland Army Depot, Pennsylvania.; commanding general, 2nd Support Command (Corps), VII Corps, U.S. Army Europe; and, at the time of his selection to lead DeCA, he had been the director of the Defense Construction Supply Center in Columbus, Ohio, a branch of the Defense Logistics Agency, for three years.

As director of the DeCA Transition Team, he united a team of functional experts from different services to put together a single functioning agency by successfully merging four disparate commissary systems in less than fourteen months. In so doing, he had done what many said could not be done. For another thirteen months, he led the agency for whose creation he had been primarily responsible, leading the way, setting the tone for the future, and getting its systems on-line and functioning.

His awards and decorations included the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, the Legion of Merit with two oak leaf clusters, the Bronze Star, the Meritorious Service medal with oak leaf cluster, the Army Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster.

Army Maj. Gen. Richard E. Beale Jr.

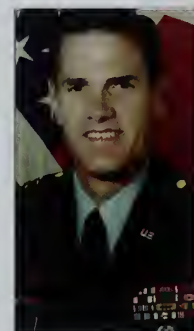
Director: November 1992 - September 1996

U.S. Army (retired), Director: October 1996 - October 1999

MAJ. GEN. Richard E. Beale Jr., was director of the Defense Personnel Support Center (DPSC) in Philadelphia prior to coming to DeCA.

A native of Bethesda, Maryland, he graduated from Wake Forest University with a bachelor's degree in economics in 1964, simultaneously being selected as distinguished military graduate and receiving his commission with the Quartermaster Corps and receiving a master's degree in public administration from the University of Missouri at Kansas City in 1974. He attended the Command and General Staff College and Industrial College of the Armed Forces.

During his military career, Beale had served in a variety of assignments within the Department of the Army and the Department of Defense, including tours of duty in command positions in Korea, Vietnam, and Europe. A thirty-one-year Army veteran upon arrival at DeCA, he served as the agency's director for four years in a military



Army Maj. Gen.
Richard E.
Beale Jr.

capacity, and three more years while a civilian for an anticipated DeCA changeover to performance-based organization (PBO) status. When the transition to PBO did not occur, Beale remained with the agency in what was understood to be a temporary basis.

While Beale headed the agency, he was able to rebuff numerous attempts at commissary privatization. The agency won several distinguished awards, including the President's Quality Award and three Hammer Awards for "reinventing government" and making the agency more responsive to its customers' needs. He secured the PBO designation for the agency, a distinction aimed at structuring the agency's business procedures.

His awards and decorations included the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Legion of Merit with three oak leaf clusters, the Bronze Star with two oak leaf clusters, the Meritorious Service Medal with oak leaf cluster, the Army Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster, and the Korean Order of National Security Merit, Cheonsu Medal. Upon his retirement from the Army in 1996, he was awarded the Army Distinguished Service Medal and the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, first oak leaf cluster.

John F. McGowan

Interim director: October 1999 – December 1999

JOHN F. MCGOWAN, a member of the Senior Executive Service, was interim director of the Defense Commissary Agency for slightly more than one month in 1999.

He graduated from Mount Saint Mary's College in Emmitsburg, Maryland, in 1963 with a bachelor's degree in business administration. He completed graduate work at Troy State University, Alabama, the Cornell University Executive Food Management Program, and the Federal Executive Institute Leadership for a Democratic Society Program.

McGowan's association with military commissaries began in 1963 with his first assignment as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force, when he was assigned as commissary officer at Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota. Other assignments included stints as a commissary officer in Japan; as the chief of service divisions at Air Force bases in Alabama, Indiana and Texas; as area exchange officer in Bangkok and U-Tapao, Thailand; and as commander of the services squadron at Takhli Royal Thai Air Force Base, Thailand.

McGowan entered civil service as a commissary management specialist for the Air Force Services Office in Philadelphia in 1975. The following year he became one of the first members of the newly formed Air Force Commissary Service (AFCOMS) as a commissary management specialist at the agency headquarters in San Antonio, Texas. Under AFCOMS he served as commissary officer at Barksdale Air Force Base, as director of the Delta Gulf and Ohio Valley Complexes, as chief of the Operations and Management Division, as deputy to the commander for the European



John F. McGowan

Region, and as director of the California and Southern Regions.

With DeCA, he was director of the agency's Southern Region for four years, director of operations for two, and executive director for Operations, a Senior Executive Service (SES) position, for two more. He was responsible for directing DeCA's worldwide operations, and overseeing DeCA headquarters and regional staff elements involved in the day-to-day management of commissaries.

After his short stint as interim director, McGowan was the agency's chief executive officer (CEO) from November 1999 to June 2001, and was responsible for the worldwide operations that encompassed four regions, 290 commissaries, and more than 17,000 employees. In June 2001, he became the Eastern Region director (another SES position), where he was responsible for 105 stores in twenty-eight states, the District of Columbia, Iceland, and Puerto Rico, with annual sales totaling nearly \$2.4 billion. He retired in 2002.

Air Force Maj. Gen. Robert J. Courter Jr.

Director: December 1999 – August 2002

MAJ. GEN. Robert J. Courter Jr., arrived at DeCA from Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, after serving two years as director of plans and programs of the U.S. Air Force Materiel Command.

He had been in the Air Force since 1968, when he was a distinguished graduate of the Reserve Officer Training Corps program and earned a Bachelor of Science degree in industrial engineering from Rutgers University. He subsequently earned a master's degree in industrial and business management from Central Michigan University. He became a graduate of the Air Command and Staff College, the Air War College, the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, National Defense University, and the Executive Development Program, Whittamore School of Business and Economics, University of New Hampshire.

Courter is a registered professional engineer in Texas, and he's a Society Fellow and previous national board member of the Society of American Military Engineers. He attained the academic position of associate professor of engineering management at the Air Force Institute of Technology, and then served in two different key resource management positions at Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C. The general served as the command civil engineer first for Air Force Logistics Command and then for Air Force Materiel Command, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. He was also the 37th Training Wing commander, Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, in charge of all basic training for the U.S. Air Force.

He commanded two squadrons as a base civil engineer and had extensive headquarters resource management experience in three separate major commands.

His awards and decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal with "V" device and oak leaf cluster, Meritorious Service Medal with four oak leaf clusters, Air Force



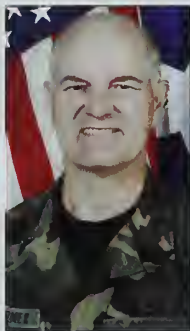
Maj. Gen.
Robert J.
Courter Jr.

Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters, Vietnam Service Medal, Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm and Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal.

Air Force Maj. Gen. Michael P. Wiedemer

Director: August 2002 – September 2004

MAJ. GEN. Michael P. Wiedemer arrived at DeCA from his position as director of requirements at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. In 1972 he received a Bachelor of Science degree in aerospace engineering, through the University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Indiana. He also received his officer's commission at Notre Dame through the ROTC program there. In 1980, he earned a Master of Science degree in industrial management from Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech) in Atlanta. In 1985, he became a distinguished graduate of the Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama.



**Maj. Gen.
Michael P.
Wiedemer**

Wiedemer had been in the Air Force for twenty-nine years when he arrived at DeCA. Noteworthy among his former positions were two in California: in one, he had the unenviable mission of closing down the Sacramento Air Logistics Center; the other was at Los Angeles Air Force Base, where he had launched the first NAVSTAR global positioning satellite.

The general had also been director of requirements, Headquarters Air Force Materiel Command, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, which was the command focal point for policy, processes and resources associated with weapon systems acquisition. In an earlier assignment at Wright-Patterson, he was director of special programs for Wright Laboratory, and director and special assistant in the Training Systems Program Office of the Aeronautical Systems Division. He had also commanded the Arnold Engineering Development Center, Tennessee, and the Sacramento Air Logistics Center in California.

Since his predecessor had strengthened DeCA's financial standing, Wiedemer was able to devote his attention to the agency's customers and personnel. He was personally dedicated to, and cared about, both the mission and those who were responsible for carrying it out, and put great stock in the power of teamwork and enthusiasm. The standards the agency set while under his direction reflected his genuine concern for the welfare of the commissary personnel who were delivering the benefit.

Among his major awards and decorations were the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster, and the Meritorious Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters.

Patrick B. Nixon

**Director and CEO: June 2006 - October 2007;
CEO and Acting Director: June 2002 - August 2002,
and October 2004 – June 2006**

PATRICK B. NIXON, the agency's chief executive officer under both Wiedemer and Courter, became acting director in 2004. He would remain dual-hatted as CEO and acting director until June 2006, when he was appointed director.

Nixon first became involved in the civilian retail food business with A&P in Detroit in 1962. After spending three years with the Marines, including a twenty-one-month tour in Vietnam with the 1st Marine Division, he returned to A&P in 1969, this time in Washington, D.C., where he held various management-level positions while earning a BA with honors at the University of Maryland. Nixon also earned a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Baltimore School of Law, and completed several executive study sessions with the Brookings Institute in Washington, D.C. He completed graduate studies with the European Institute of Public Administration in Brussels, Belgium, and Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

In 1983, he joined the U.S. Army Troop Support Agency's commissaries, serving as a management specialist at the agency's Northeast Region, as a meat department manager for three commissaries at Fort Bragg, and as a commissary officer for stores at Fort Devens (Massachusetts), Fort Meade (Maryland), and Walter Reed Army Medical Center (D.C.). In 1988-89, he became the Marine Corps' commissary program manager, served as director of the Marines' West Coast Complex, and became the Marines' representative on the Jones Commission.

In 1990-91, as a senior civilian member of the DeCA Transition Team, he helped establish the Defense Commissary Agency. He became director of the agency's southwest and northeast regions, deputy director of the European Region, and director of the Eastern Region prior to accepting the position of chief executive officer in 2001. Beginning in 2004, he wore two hats as the agency's CEO and acting director.

Upon becoming DeCA director in June 2006, he was the first full-time director of any commissary agency to ascend to that position entirely through the civilian ranks of the U.S. Civil Service. He was also the only DeCA director with any full-time store-level commissary and civilian retail grocery experience. When he retired from DeCA and Civil Service in October 2007, he became the president of the American Logistics Agency, a key and long-time business partner of the commissaries.

Nixon's awards and decorations include the Presidential Rank Award for Meritorious Senior Executives and Professionals; the Secretary of Defense Medal for Meritorious Civilian Service; the Senior Executive Service Exceptional Performance Award; the Defense Commissary Agency's Distinguished Civilian Service; the DeCA Meritorious Civilian Service Award (four awards); the U.S. Navy Meritorious Civilian Service Award; the U.S. Army Commanders Award for Civilian Service; the Navy Achievement Medal with "V" device for valor; and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry.



Patrick B. Nixon

Richard S. Page*Acting Director, October 2007 - June 2008*

RICHARD S. "RICK" PAGE, a member of the Senior Executive Service, became acting director for the Defense Commissary Agency shortly after Pat Nixon's retirement. Page oversees the operations and business processes of an agency that employs more than eighteen thousand people and includes a headquarters, three regions, and 258 commissaries located in thirteen countries around the world, with annual sales of more than \$5.5 billion in fiscal 2007.

At the time he became acting director, Page had nearly forty years of quality retail experience in the grocery business. He had served as the agency's chief operating officer after completing five years as the director of DeCA West. As the COO, he was responsible for oversight of the agency's retail operations, safety and security, program management, plans, and systems engineering in support of the day-to-day operations of DeCA's worldwide chain of commissaries.

Page joined Alterman Foods of Atlanta in 1968, and for the next ten years he was promoted to various and progressive management positions within that company. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in business administration at the University of Georgia in 1978.

In 1978, he entered civil service and became the commissary manager of the store at Athens, Georgia, for the Navy Resale and Services Support Office (NAVRESSO). His career with the Navy included positions as manager of grocery operations, deputy director, and later director of NAVRESSO's Jacksonville Commissary Region, Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Florida; deputy director, Seattle Region (Washington); director of NAVRESSO's Mechanicsburg Region (Pennsylvania); deputy director, and then director, of NAVRESSO's Jacksonville Region.

With the Defense Commissary Agency, his assignments included the Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Florida; deputy director, Southern Region, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama; manager, Zone 13, Naval Base Pearl Harbor, Hawaii; deputy director, Southwest Region, Marine Corps Air Station El Toro, California; deputy director, Defense Commissary Agency OCONUS, Western/Pacific Region (California); deputy director, Western/Pacific Region, CONUS stores (California); acting director, DeCA Western/Pacific Region, McClellan, California; director, Defense Commissary Agency West (California); chief operating officer, Defense Commissary Agency Headquarters, at Fort Lee, Virginia; acting director, Defense Commissary Agency, Fort Lee.

Page has taken part in the Office of Personnel Management Executive Development Program (1994) and the Federal Executive Institute Executive Leadership Program (2000).

His awards and honors include the Defense Distinguished Civilian Service Award, the Defense Commissary Agency Civilian Meritorious Service Award (three awards), the California Air Force Association's 2004 Civilian of the Year Award, and 1988's Federal Executive of the Year for Central Pennsylvania.

**Richard S. Page****Philip E. Sakowitz Jr.***Director and CEO, June 2008 -*

PHILIP E. SAKOWITZ JR., a member of the Senior Executive Service, was selected director of DeCA in the spring of 2008. He had previously served as the principal executive director of the US Army Installation Management Command (IMCOM). At IMCOM he directed the one of the most comprehensive multi-disciplinary organizations in the Army, managing base facilities, programs, services and infrastructure sustainment for 110 Army installations worldwide. He provided oversight of an \$13 billion annual budget, 116,000 employees, 14,970 million acres of land and 934.8 million square feet of facilities worth \$211.7 billion. Sakowitz was also the senior Army civilian responsible for the daily execution of the Base Realignment and Closure actions directed by the president and Congress.

Before his position in IMCOM, Sakowitz was selected by the Secretary of the Army to lead the Transformation of Installation Management Task Force. This bold initiative entailed organizing the operations of fifteen separate and distinct commands into one centralized structure to ensure efficient, effective and standardized installation management across the Army. This effort was considered the most significant personnel movement in three decades within the Army and culminated in the establishment of the largest field operating agency in the history of the Army.

Sakowitz has also served in two previous Senior Executive Service assignments: As deputy chief of staff for Base Operations Support, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) from 1998 - 2002, he was responsible for installation management doctrine, policies, resources, standards and programs for fifteen major Army installations. Before that position, he served as assistant deputy chief of staff for personnel and installation management, U.S. Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) from 1996 - 1998. There, he was responsible for installation management, individual and unit personnel readiness, mobilization planning and support, oversight of DOD's largest major command, composed of over 800 thousand soldiers and 30 thousand civilians.

Due to his significant accomplishments, Sakowitz has been honored twice, by Presidents Clinton and Bush, as a Meritorious Presidential Rank recipient, recognizing him as a leader in the top 5 percent of the entire federal government Senior Executive Service. He has received the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People's Award of Recognition for Service and Contributions to our Country in the areas of Civil Rights, Race Relations, Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action and Public Service. He won the Office of the Secretary of the Army's Award for Outstanding Achievement in Equal Employment Opportunity. He has also received the Army's highest civilian award, the Decoration for Exceptional Civilian Service.

Sakowitz graduated from Long Island University in 1975 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Health and Physical Education, while attending on a basketball scholarship.

**Philip E. Sakowitz Jr.**

Members of the Bowers Commission, 1975

LEADERSHIP

Chairman, ARMY BRIG. GEN. EMMETT W. BOWERS, commander of the U.S. Army Troop Support Agency

Vice-Chairman, NAVY CAPT. ROBERT L. BREVIN, director of the Commissary Store Division of the Naval Resale System Office

ARMY REPRESENTATIVES

LT. COL. JAMES R. MAY, U.S. Army commissary staff officer, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, (logistics), Department of the Army

WALTER H. McDONALD, deputy director, commissary operations, U.S. Army Troop Support Agency

LT. COL. JAMES G. McKNIGHT, logistics systems officer, management information systems directorate, Office of the Chief of Staff, Department of the Army

MAJ. CARTER H. BRANTNER, operations research analyst, Office of the Comptroller of the Army, Department of the Army

JOHN McAULIFFE, personnel management specialist, Personnel Field Operations Agency, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel, Department of the Army

ROBERT H. PRESCOTT, commissary management analyst, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, (logistics), Department of the Army

NAVY REPRESENTATIVES

CMDR. VAN L. REEDER, Naval Supply Center, San Diego

LYLE E. THOMAS, commissary officer, Commissary Store Complex, Norfolk, Virginia

DAVID E. HODGE, senior accountant, controller division, Navy Resale System Office

MARINE CORPS REPRESENTATIVE

CECIL SAUNDERS, commissary program analyst, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff (installations and logistics), facilities and service division, Services Branch, HQ, USMC

AIR FORCE REPRESENTATIVES

COL. JERRY E. CONNER, general counsel, Air Force Military Justice Directorate, Office of the Judge Advocate General, HQ USAF

COL. JOHN T. MILLER, chief, Air Force Services Office, Air Force Logistics Command

FRANK D. DERBY, deputy director of the directorate of housing and services, HQ Strategic Air Command

CAPT. JOSE N. VELEZ, cost analyst, USAF Office of the Comptroller

ARMY AND AIR FORCE EXCHANGE SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

WILLIAM J. BARNES, assistant to the director of merchandising, HQ, AAFES

DEFENSE SUPPLY AGENCY REPRESENTATIVE

LT. COL. WILLIAM B. GANGE, chief, procurement and production division, directorate of subsistence, Defense Personnel Support Center

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

JOHN BECHER, special advisor for public affairs, special assistant to director for defense information, assistant secretary of defense (public affairs)

ADMINISTRATIVE AND CLERICAL SUPPORT

ARMY MAJ. ROBERT E. YRJANSON, military executive officer

MAE P. GILLUS, executive secretary

AIR FORCE SGT. WILLIAM A. CAMPBELL, secretary

AIR FORCE SGT. JAMES E. DOLAN, secretary

BILLIE GUNNELL, secretary

DIANA PATTEN, secretary (Army)

AIR FORCE SGT. JAMES A. THOMAS, secretary

SHARON L. WHITE, secretary (Army)

ELIZABETH S. YEAPANIS, secretary

Appendix 6

Members of the Jones Commission, 1989

STEERING GROUP

Chairman, ARMY LT. GEN. DONALD W. JONES, deputy assistant secretary of defense, military manpower and personnel policy
AIR FORCE LT. GEN. CHARLES C. McDONALD, deputy chief of staff, logistics and engineering
AIR FORCE LT. GEN. HENRY VICELLIO JR., deputy chief of staff, logistics and engineering
NAVY VICE ADM. STANLEY N. ARTHUR, deputy chief of Naval Operations (logistics)
MARINE LT. GEN. W. G. CARSON, deputy chief of staff for installations and logistics
ROBERT A. STONE, deputy assistant secretary of defense (installations)
HERBERT H. KRAFT, deputy assistant secretary of defense (management systems)
ALVIN TUCKER, deputy assistant secretary of defense (management systems)

TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP

AIR FORCE MAJ. GEN. M. GARY ALKIRE, AFCOMS commanding officer
NAVY REAR ADM. RODNEY K. SQUIBB, NAVRESSO commanding officer
ARMY BRIG. GEN. JAMES S. HAYES, TSA commanding officer
ARMY BRIG. GEN. CHARELES E. ST. ARNAUD, TSA commanding officer
MARINE BRIG. GEN. MICHAEL P. DOWNS, director, facilities and services division
MARINE BRIG. GEN. W. T. ADAMS, director, facilities and services division

STUDY GROUP

AIR FORCE COL. RICHARD J. TESSIER, director, AFCOMS liaison, Pentagon
ARMY LT. COL. ELDRIDGE J. VINCENT, deputy director, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff (logistics): commissary team chief
MARVIN X. BECK, TSA: deputy director, engineering and materiel
RONALD K. CLARK, AFCOMS: deputy director, North Central Region
FRANCES F. FLEMING, TSA: budget officer, chief of budget division
VINCENT R. FOLIO, DPSC: chief, storage support division
HUGH M. "MAC" FRAMPTON, Headquarters, Military Transportation Management Command: traffic management specialist
JAMES P. GILDERSLEEVE, AAFES: liaison, Washington Office
MARIE HOLLOWAY, TSA
WILLIAM HOOVER, AFCOMS
JOSEPH JEU, USMC: head, Service Branch
JOHN A. LIDDY, AFCOMS: deputy director of engineering
THOMAS E. MILKS, TSA: chief, operations division
PATRICK NIXON, USMC: commissary program manager
ARLENE F. RIPP, NAVRESSO: commissary resale program specialist
THOMAS F. ROWE, NAVRESSO: manager, Wage, Classification and Position Management Branch
CARL W. SMITH, AFCOMS: chief of program management division
MARGARET F. "PEGGY" YOUNG, NAVRESSO: manager, commissary operations

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

ARMY COL. WILLIAM H. WARNOCK

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

YN1 LORETTA B. SUTTON, U.S. Navy Reserve, supervisor
SGT. MICKALYN G. CLARK, U.S. Air Force
SGT. DEMETRIA M. MILES, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve
SGT. THERESA A. KLUGER, U.S. Air Force
SGT. GILBERT RANDALL, U.S. Army
CPL. GERALD WOODARD, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve
SPC LASHUNDER HODGE, U.S. Army
LANCE CPL. WILLIAM ROOT, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve

OTHER SUPPORT

SGT. 1ST CLASS REXFORD MILLER, U.S. Army

(Sources: *The Jones Commission: A DoD Study of Military Commissaries*. Washington, D.C. Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense [Force Management and Personnel], 18 Dec 1989, Vol. II, pp. vii-ix. Also see "DoD study of the military commissary system," *Military Market*, June 1989, p. 4.)

Appendix 7

Service Commissary Systems Headquarters, Region/Field Office Locations, 1989-90 *(On the eve of commissary consolidation)*

ARMY: U.S. ARMY TROOP SUPPORT AGENCY (TSA)

Headquarters: Weatherly Hall, Fort Lee, Virginia

Northeast Commissary Operating Region (NECOR), Fort Meade, Maryland; Southeast Commissary Operating Region (SECOR),
collocated with headquarters at Fort Lee, Virginia

Midwest Commissary Operating Region (MICOR), Fort Sam Houston, Texas; Western Commissary Operating Region, Fort Lewis,
Washington

Europe Commissary Operating Region (EURCOR), Heidelberg, Germany

European Districts: V Corps – Frankfurt; V Corps – Giessen; 21st SUPCOM – Heidelberg; VII Corps/7 ATC – Bamberg; VII Corps –
Stuttgart; and VII Corps/SETAF/ME – Munich

NAVY: NAVY RESALE AND SYSTEMS SUPPORT OFFICE (NAVRESSO)

Headquarters: Naval Base Staten Island, New York

Field Support Offices: Davisville, Rhode Island; Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania; Norfolk, Virginia; NAS Jacksonville, Florida; NS San Diego,
California; Oakland, California; Auburn, Washington; Pearl Harbor, Hawaii

Complex/Region offices: NAS Corpus Christi, Texas; NAS Pensacola, Florida; NTC Great Lakes, Illinois

AIR FORCE: AIR FORCE COMMISSARY SERVICE (AFCOMS)

Headquarters: Thompson Hall, Building 3030, at Kelly AFB, Texas

California Region: Norton AFB, California

European Region (renamed European Theater, 1990): Ramstein AB, Germany. European Districts: United Kingdom, RAF Lakenheath; Central
European, Vogelweh, Germany; Mediterranean, Aviano AB, Italy

North Central Region: Offutt AFB, Nebraska (merged into Central Region, 1990, HQ at Lackland AFB)

Northeast Region: Langley AFB, Virginia

Northwest Region: McChord AFB, Washington

Pacific Region: Hickam AFB, Hawaii

Southern Region: Maxwell AFB, Alabama

South Central Region: Lackland AFB, Texas [merged into Central Region, 1990, HQ at Lackland AFB]

Southwest Region: Luke AFB, Arizona

MARINE CORPS: MARINE CORPS COMMISSARY PROGRAM OFFICE, MARINE CORPS SERVICES BRANCH (MCC)

Headquarters: Commonwealth Building, Wilson Boulevard, Rosslyn, Arlington, Virginia

East Coast Complex: Camp Lejeune, North Carolina

West Coast Complex: MCB El Toro, California

Appendix 8

Original Members of the DeCA Transition Team, 1990 - 1991

NOTE: Position titles shown here in bold are those held with the transition team. Organizations indicated are those from which these individuals were assigned.

ARMY MAJ. GEN. JOHN P. DRESKA, director; commander, Defense Construction Supply Center, Columbus, Ohio

ARMY COL. WILLIAM FLANAGAN, chief of staff; commander, Defense Subsistence Region - Europe

JAMES R. AUSTIN, information management (chief); TSA

MARVIN X. BECK, facilities; TSA

JAMES A. DOHERTY, distribution; AFCOMS

MICHAEL J. DOWLING, distribution; TSA

VINCENT R. FOLIO, distribution; Defense Personnel Support Center

MICHAEL R. GASTON, information resource management; Secretary of the Air Force (acquisition)

AIR FORCE MAJ. DONALD R. GREIMAN, administration (chief); AFCOMS

AIR FORCE LT. COL. WAYNE D. GRIESS, information resource management; AFCOMS

S. DWIGHT HALL, personnel/organization; AFCOMS

WYNN L. HASTY, III, personnel/organization; TSA

CROSBY H. JOHNSON, distribution; TSA

GORDON JONES, information resource management; TSA

JACQUES B. LORAIN JR., plans; NAVRESSO

GARY G. LUTZ, finance (chief); TSA

WILLIAM G. MACKRAIN, operations; AFCOMS

RAYMOND MILLER, distribution; Defense Personnel Supply Center

PATRICK B. NIXON, plans & operations (chief); USMC

KENNETH N. PERROTTE, public affairs (chief); AFCOMS

AIR FORCE LT. COL. STANLEY B. POLK, plans (chief); AFCOMS

DANIEL SCLATER, personnel/organization (chief); TSA

SCOTT E. SIMPSON, distribution (chief); NAVRESSO

CLARENCE V. "VIC" SPRADLEY, personnel/organization; AFCOMS

ARMY LT. COL. E. J. "VINCE" VINCENT, operations chief; Office of Deputy Chief of Staff (logistics)

NAVY CMDR. MARK WESTIN, finance; NAVRESSO

WALTER L. WINTERS JR., facilities (chief); AFCOMS

MARGARET F. "PEGGY" YOUNG, distribution; NAVRESSO

RUSSELL W. ZIMMERMAN, finance; AFCOMS

OTHER CONTRIBUTING INDIVIDUALS

WILLIAM SHARKEY, interim director, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Colin McMillan's assistant)

MARINE BRIG. GEN. JOHN ARICK, Marine Corps

ARMY BRIG. GEN. CHARLES ST. ARNAUD, TSA

AIR FORCE MAJ. GEN. ROBERT SWARTS, AFCOMS

NAVY REAR ADMIRAL HARVEY D. WEATHERSON, NAVRESSO

ARMY COL. CESAR "ED" MOREL, engineering/facilities, TSA

NAVY CAPT. HOWARD "NED" KUHNS, NAVRESSO

Appendix 9

DeCA's Key Personnel, October 1, 1991 and June 1, 2008

DECA KEY PERSONNEL, OCTOBER 1, 1991

HEADQUARTERS		
<u>Position/Office</u>	<u>Name, Service</u>	<u>Prior Affiliation</u>
Director	Army Maj. Gen. John P. Dreska	Director, Defense Construction Supply Center, Columbus, Ohio
Deputy Director	Roy C. Speight	AFCOMS deputy
Chief of Staff	Army Col. William Flanagan	Commander, Defense Subsistence Region, Europe
Executive Officer	Air Force Lt. Col. Sally Gabrielson	AFCOMS
Enlisted Advisor	Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Russell Moffett	AFCOMS/senior enlisted advisor
Acquisition Mgt	Crosby H. Johnson	TSA
Facilities	Army Col. Cesar R. E. "Ed" Morel	TSA
Facilities: Lackland AFB, Texas	Retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Walt Winters	AFCOMS
General Counsel	Air Force Col. William Sherman	13th Air Force
Information Resource Mgt	Rose Parkes	TSA
Inspector General	Air Force Col. Gary Metzinger	AFCOMS
Liaison Officer	Col. Terry Fowler	AFCOMS
Operations	Robert D. "Bob" Tate	AFCOMS
Personnel & Training	S. Dwight Hall	AFCOMS
Plans & Analysis	Navy Capt. Don Foster	Navy
Public Affairs	Kenneth N. Perrotte	AFCOMS
Quality Assurance	Army Col. William Ridder	TSA
Resource Mgt	Gary G. Lutz	TSA
REGIONS		
Central Region NAB Little Creek, Va.	Director: Cecil Saunders Deputy: Dennis Syracuse	TSA; earlier, with USMC TSA
European Region Ramstein AB, Germany	Director: Charles Wiker Deputy: Army Col. Sandra Whitt	TSA
Midwest Region Kelly AFB, Texas	Director: Air Force Col. Jim Scott Deputy: Ron Renaud	AFCOMS TSA
Northeast Region Fort Meade, Md.	Director: Antonio Collazo Deputy: Austin K. Smith	AFCOMS
Northwest/Pacific Region Fort Lewis, Wash.	Director: Col. Ray Ansel, USA Deputy: Ed Dove	TSA
Southern Region Maxwell AFB, Ala.	Director: John McGowan Deputy: Curtis J. Day, Jr.	AFCOMS AFCOMS
Southwest Region MCAS El Toro, Calif.	Director: Patrick Nixon Deputy: Scott Simpson	USMC Commissaries NAVRESSO
East Service Center	Director: Chet Boutelle Chief of Contracting: Larry Hahn	TSA TSA
West Service Center	Director: Candido "Candi" Corrada Chief of Contracting: Bob Sine	AFCOMS AFCOMS

DECA KEY PERSONNEL, AS OF JUNE 1, 2008

HEADQUARTERS

Position/OfficeName of Chief or Director**Director and Chief Executive Officer**

Senior Enlisted Advisor
 Executive Officer to the Director
 Inspector General
 Internal Audit
 General Counsel
 DeCA Washington Office (Legislative Liaison)
 Chief Financial Executive
 Human Resources Directorate
 Chief Information Officer

Philip E. Sakowitz, Jr., SES*

CSM Victor M. Garcia
 Norman E. Brown
 John T. Maffei
 Diana P. Graff
 William E. Sherman
 Dan W. Sclater
 Pamela F. Conklin
 Jerry D. Oestreich
 Janet L. Haase

Chief Operating Officer

Contracting Directorate
 Corporate Communications Directorate
 Corporate Operations Group
 Corporate Planning Directorate
 Equal Employment Opportunity
 Leadership Development
 Performance and Policy Directorate
 Program Management Directorate
 Public Health and Safety Directorate
 Sales Directorate
 Systems Engineering Directorate

Richard S. Page, SES*

John P. Lavinus III
 James J. Hudson
 Bonita M. Moffett
 Vicki L. Archiletti
 Marcus G. Lashley
 Herbert Winchester Jr.
 Robert E. Hayden
 Greg J. Juday
 Christopher E. Wicker (acting)
 Randall L. Chandler
 Gerald G. Adair

REGIONS

DeCA East Region Director**DeCA Europe Region Director** (*Europe, Middle East and Africa*)**DeCA West Region Director** (*Western USA, Alaska, Pacific & Far East*)

Michael Dowling, SES*

Thomas E. Milks, SES*

Scott E. Simpson, SES*

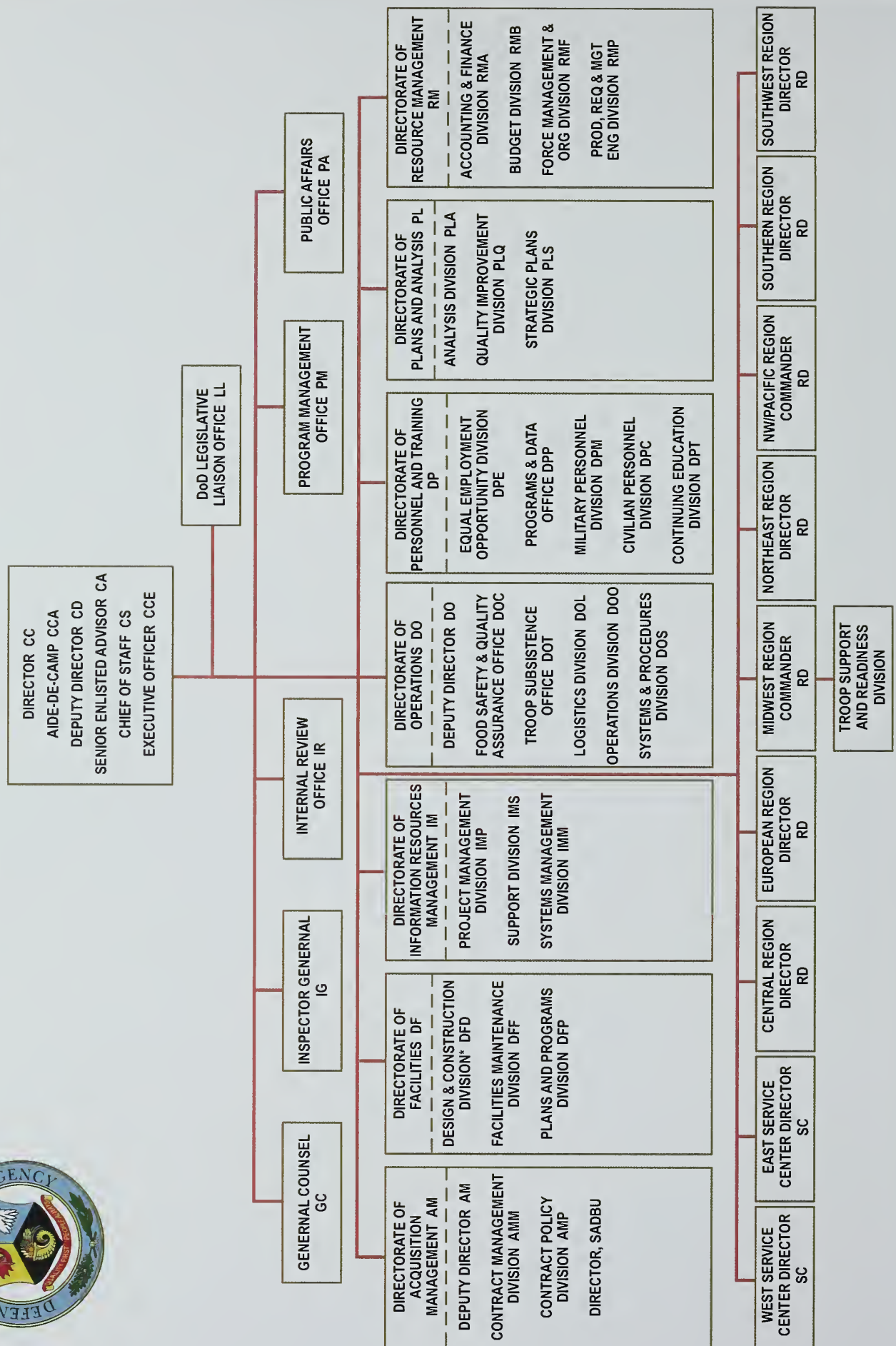
* — SES: Senior Executive Service



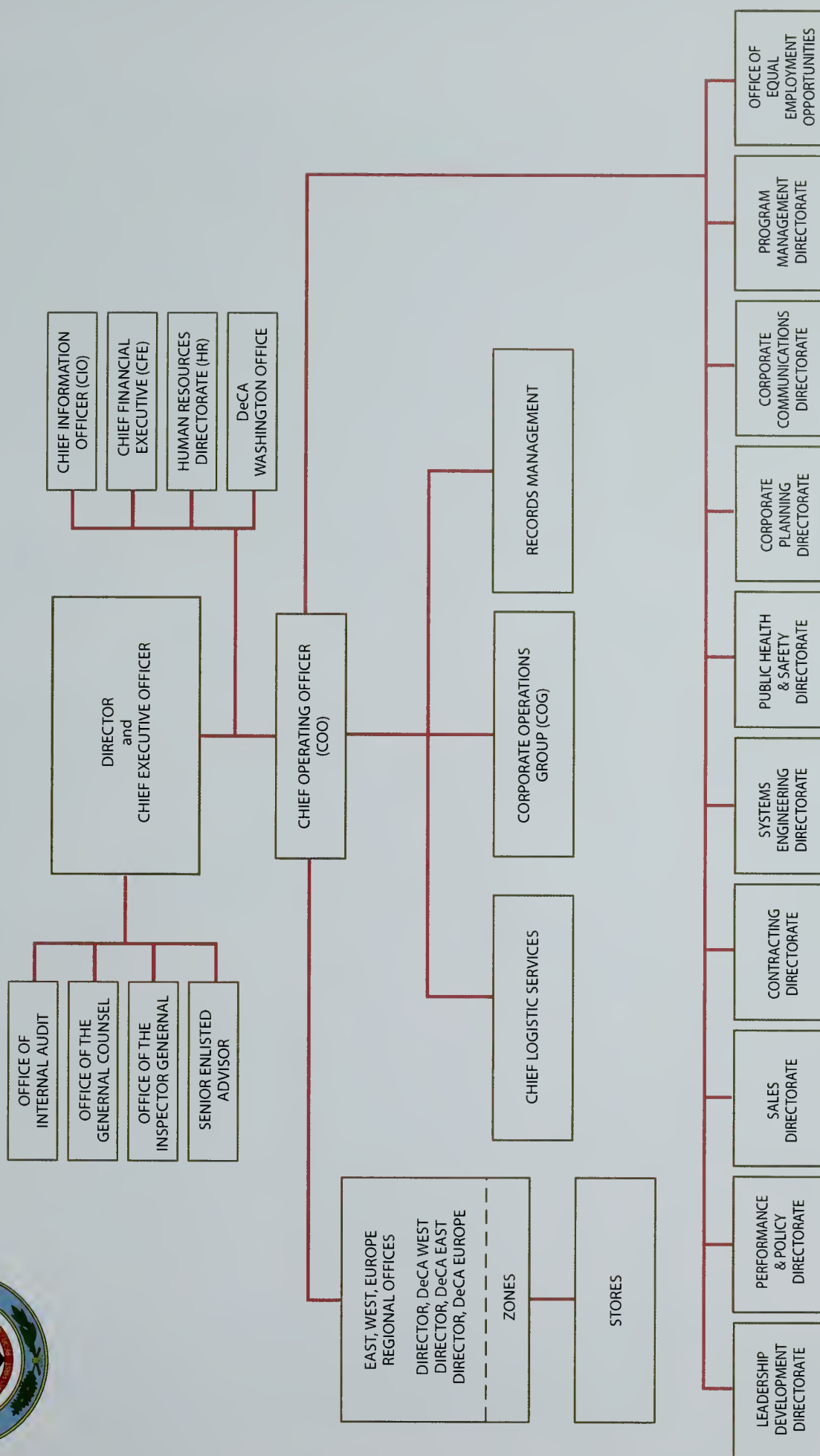
DEFENSE COMMISSARY AGENCY

AS OF OCTOBER, 1991

Appendix 10 Organizational Charts and Maps, DeCA, 1991 and 2008



DEFENSE COMMISSARY AGENCY
HQ DeCA 1300 E Avenue Building 11200 Fort Lee Virginia 23801-1800
Commercial: (804) 734-(Plus Ext) DSN: 687- (Plus Ext)



Defense Commissary Agency CONUS/OCONUS Stores as of October 1, 1991

Northwest/Pacific Region

Northeast Region

Central Region

Southwest Region

Midwest Region

Southern Region

European Region

ALASKA

OAHU, HAWAII

AUSTRALIA

SOUTH KOREA

PHILIPPINES

JAPAN

GUAM

ICELAND

AZORES

EGYPT

SAUDI ARABIA

GERMANY

TURKEY

UNITED KINGDOM

ITALY

NETHERLANDS

BELGIUM

NORWAY

SPAIN

BERMUDA

PUERTO RICO

CUBA

PANAMA

Defense Commissary Agency CONUS/OCONUS Stores as of June 1, 2008



Appendix 11

Locations of DeCA's Original Commissaries (As of October 1, 1991)

Note: Building/opening dates are listed by calendar year rather than fiscal year, since fiscal year information regarding construction or opening was seldom available; unk = presently unknown. Base designations are as of 1991.

STORES ACQUIRED FROM U.S. ARMY TROOP SUPPORT AGENCY (TSA)

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u> (TSA)	<u>BUILDING</u> <u>NUMBER</u>	<u>YEAR</u> <u>BUILT or</u> <u>OPENED</u>
Aberdeen PG, Md.	321	1914
Amberg (Pond Barracks), Germany	16A	1954?
Ansbach, Germany	5805	1938
Aschaffenburg, Germany	688	1953
Augsburg, Germany	91/4	1955
Babenhausen, Germany	4615	1952
Bad Aibling, Germany	326	1945
Bad Hersfeld, Germany	8014	1934
Bad Kissingen, Germany	93	1952
Bad Kreuznach, Germany	56707	1989
Bad Nauheim, Germany	5618	1953
Bamberg, Germany	7123	1925
Baumholder, Germany	8575	1977
Berlin, Germany	64	1964
Bindlach, Germany	9270	@1972
Bitburg, Germany	77	1989
Bremerhaven, Germany	107/250	1952
Buedingen, Germany	1812	1963
Bueren, Germany	7	1988?
Cairo, Egypt	9999	1950
Cameron Station, Va.	2	1942
Camp Carroll, S. Korea	T136	1985
Camp Casey, S. Korea	S3030	1970
Camp Edwards, S. Korea	S113	1953
Camp Humphreys, S. Korea	S105	1988
Camp King, Germany	1031	1952
Camp Kure, Japan	S-250	1987
Camp Merrill, Ga.	25	1964
Camp Page, S. Korea	T435	1955
Camp Stanley, S. Korea	T2467	1970
Camp Zama, Japan	680	1952
Carlisle Barracks, Pa.	851	1938
C. E. Kelly Support Facility, Pa.	S-1	1959
Chievres, Belgium	7010	1967
C. M. Price Support Center (Granite City) Ill.	231	1953
Corozal, Panama	201	1948
Crailsheim, Germany	105	1952
Darmstadt, Germany	4132	1952
DDRE (New Cumberland, Pa.)	1-1	1918
Dexheim, Germany	6345	1989

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u> (TSA)	<u>BUILDING</u> <u>NUMBER</u>	<u>YEAR</u> <u>BUILT or</u> <u>OPENED</u>
DGSC (Defense General Supply Ctr/) Richmond, Va.	WH30	1942
Dhahran, Saudi. Arabia	1000	1940
Dugway PG, Utah	5114	1953
Edgewood Arsenal, Md.	1930	1918
Erlangen, Germany	4068	1990
Fischbach, Germany	7123	pre-1988
Fitzsimons AMC, Colo.	527	1918
Flensburg, Germany	1	@1983
Fliegerhorst, Germany	1357	1934
Frankfurt, Germany	1571	1954
Fort Belvoir, Va.	2302	1982
Fort Benjamin Harrison, Ind..	19	1983
Fort Benning, Ga.	9230	1974
Fort Bliss, Texas	1717	1979
Fort Bragg, N.C.	8-5476	1974
Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico	605	1941
Fort Campbell, Ky.	2702	1976
Fort Carson, Colo.	1525	1972
Fort Devens, Mass.	1410	1991
Fort Drum, N.Y.	10730C	1988
Fort Eustis, Va.	1607	1952?
Fort Gillem, Ga.	214	1942
Fort Gordon, Ga.	7200	1979
Fort Greely, Alaska	601	1956
Fort Gulick (Ft Espinar), Panama	301	1942
Fort Hamilton, N.Y.	124	1961
Fort Hood, Texas/store #1	5001	1975
Fort Hood, Texas/store #2	512	1942
Fort Huachuca, Ariz.	61610	1978
Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif.	S-182	1991
Fort Irwin, Calif.	920	1988
Fort Jackson, S.C.	4716	1985
Fort Knox, Ky.	121	1974
Fort Leavenworth, Kan.	691	1983
Fort Lee, Va.	1600	1979
Fort Leonard Wood, Mo	485	1991
Fort Lewis, Wash.	5275	1986
Fort McClellan, Ala.	2041	1980
Fort McCoy, Wis.	2134	1942
Fort McNair, D.C.	35	1920
Fort McPherson, Ga.	360	1940
Fort Meade, Md.	2786	1986
Fort Monmouth, N.J.	1004	1971
Fort Monroe, Va.	181	1934
Fort Myer, Va.	420	1920
Fort Ord, Calif.	4240	1973
Fort Polk, La.	830	1976
Fort Richardson, Alaska	5	1956

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u> (TSA)	<u>BUILDING</u> <u>NUMBER</u>	<u>YEAR</u> <u>BUILT or</u> <u>OPENED</u>	<u>NAME, LOCATION</u> (TSA)	<u>BUILDING</u> <u>NUMBER</u>	<u>YEAR</u> <u>BUILT or</u> <u>OPENED</u>
Fort Riley, Kan.	222	1907	Pirmasens, Germany	4525	1951
Fort Ritchie, Md.	508	1943	Presidio of San Francisco, Calif.	610	1989
Fort Rucker, Ala.	9213	1969	Pruem, Germany	2908	@1973
Fort Sam Houston, Texas	379	1934	Pusan, S. Korea	638	1959
Fort Shafter, Hawaii	341	1917	Redstone Arsenal, Ala.	3224	1979
Fort Sheridan, Ill.	599	1989	Regensburg, Germany	5	1945
Fort Sill, Okla.	1719	1975	Riyadh, Saudi Arabia	0-1	1965
Fort Stewart, Ga.	421	1978	Robinson Barracks, Germany	146	1988
Fort Story, Va.	5-505	1950	Rock Island Arsenal, Ill.	334	1974
Fort Wainwright, Alaska	3703	1990	Sagami Depot, Japan	T-8011	1960
Fuerth, Germany	103	1988	Sagamihara, Japan	S-114	1986
Fulda, Germany	7308	1953	Schinnen, Netherlands	T-25	1976
Garlstadt, Germany	418	1990	Schofield Barracks, Hawaii	3320	1974
Garmisch, Germany	501	1936	Schwabach, Germany	1005	pre-1987
Gelnhausen, Germany	1806	1952	Schwaebisch Hall, Germany	435	1936
Germersheim, Germany	7852	1956	Schweinfurt, Germany	502	1958
Giebelstadt, Germany	550	1986	Selfridge ANGB, Mich.	701	1991
Giessen, Germany	15-17	1966	Seneca AD, N.Y.	723/4	1956
Goeppingen, Germany	314	1954?	Sierra Army Depot, Calif.	59	1942
Grafenwoehr, Germany	150	1956	Sogel, Germany	10	@1983
Hanau, Germany	500	1986	Taegu, S. Korea (<i>Camp Henry</i>)	S-221	1959
Hannam Village, S. Korea	1002	1968	Tobyhanna Army Depot, Pa.	816	1943
Heidelberg, Germany	3850	1929	Trier, Germany	unk	1957
Heilbronn, Germany (<i>Neckersulm</i>)	217	@1954	Vicenza, Italy	302	1958
Herzo Base, Germany	1605	pre-1988	Vilseck, Germany	2204	1989
Hohenfels, Germany	1	1952	Vint Hill Farms Station, Va.	396	1945
Howard AFB, Panama**			Walter Reed AMC, Md.	162	1971
(TSA store on Air Force base)	1	1941	Wertheim, Germany	11	1952
Hunter AAF, Ga.	1031	1943	West Point, N.Y. (<i>US Mil Acad</i>)	1200	1989
Idar Oberstein, Germany	9025	1938	White Sands Missile Rge, N.M.	890	1965
Illesheim, Germany	6509	1936	Wiesbaden, Germany	765	1952
Karlsruhe, Germany	9063	1953	Wildflecken, Germany	700	1940
Kelley Barracks, Germany	3316	1925	Wildflecken II, Germany	233	1938
Kirchgoens, Germany	4681	1967	Worms, Germany	5010	1953
Kitzingen, Germany	186	1982	Wuerzburg, Germany	47	1989
Landstuhl, Germany	3710	1936	Yongsan, S. Korea	5420	1988
Lexington-Bluegrass			Yuma PG, Ariz.	536	1988
Army Depot, Ky.	16F	1943	Zweibruecken, Germany	4104	1990
Livorno, Italy (<i>Camp Darby</i>)	725	1953			
Mainz, Germany	6717	1952			
Mannheim, Germany	313-H	1956			
Mallonee Village, N.C. (<i>Ft Bragg</i>)	69344	1942			
McCully Barracks, Germany	6241	1938			
Muenster, Germany	10	pre-1988			
Munich, Germany	2	@1951			
Neubrucke, Germany	9944	1954			
Oakland Army Base, Calif.	590	1944			
Panzer Barracks, Germany	unk	pre-1988			
Patch Barracks, Germany	2350	1988			
Picatinny Arsenal (<i>ARDEC</i>), N.J.	3312	1952			

STORES ACQUIRED FROM THE AIR FORCE COMMISSARY SERVICE (AFCOMS)

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u> (AFCOMS)	<u>BUILDING</u> <u>NUMBER</u>	<u>YEAR</u> <u>BUILT or</u> <u>OPENED</u>
Air Force Academy, Colo.	5126	1958
Altus AFB, Okla	16	1986
Andersen AFB, Guam	22021	1955
Andrews AFB, Md.	1684	1981
Ankara AS, Turkey	2051	1966

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u> (AFCOMS)	<u>BUILDING</u> <u>NUMBER</u>	<u>YEAR</u> <u>BUILT or</u> <u>OPENED</u>	<u>NAME, LOCATION</u> (AFCOMS)	<u>BUILDING</u> <u>NUMBER</u>	<u>YEAR</u> <u>BUILT or</u> <u>OPENED</u>
Arnold AFS, Tenn.	125	1982	Hurlburt Field, Fla.	91013	1958
Athens, Greece (<i>downtown</i>) Ford Bldg		1947-48*; 1956	Incirlik AB, Turkey	877	1988
Aviano AB, Italy	141	1955	Iraklion, Crete (<i>Greece</i>)	56	1958
Avon Park AS, Fla.	244	1984	Izmir AS, Turkey	20	1955
Bangor ANGB, Maine	420	1987	Kadena AFB, Okinawa	407	1981
Barksdale AFB, La.	4765	1978	Keesler AFB, Miss.	3401	1972
Beale AFB, Calif.	25608	1973	Kelly AFB, Texas	1626	1940
Belle Fourche AFS, S.D.	2305	1987	Kirtland AFB, N.M.	20180	1988
Bergstrom AFB, Texas	1460	1976	K. I. Sawyer AFB, Mich.	634	1958
Bolling AFB, D.C.	4570	1990	Kunsan AB, S. Korea	1506	1960
Brooks AFB, Texas	661	1988	Lackland AFB, Texas	8400	1976
Camp Courtney, Okinawa (<i>Japan</i>)**	4131	1987	Lajes Field, Azores (<i>Portugal</i>)	T-326	1989
Camp Foster, Okinawa (<i>Japan</i>)**	5675	1987	LaJunta AFS, Colo.	200	1988
Camp Kinser, Okinawa (<i>Japan</i>)**	1227	1990	Langley AFB, Va.	291	1979
Cannon AFB, N.M.	77A	1980	Laughlin AFB, Texas	352	1958
Carswell AFB, Texas	1765	1985	Little Rock AFB, Ark.	790	1980
Castle AFB, Calif.	765	1990	Loring AFB, Maine	8700	1986
Chanute AFB, Ill.	348	1981	Los Angeles AFB, Calif.	251	1983
Charleston AFB, S.C.	1995	1972	Lowry AFB, Colo.	640	1953
Columbus AFB, Ga.	160B	1981	Luke AFB, Ariz.	1550	1974
Conrad AFS, Mont.	400	1987	MacDill AFB, Fla.	925	1987
Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.	2615	1977	Malmstrom AFB, Mont.	1320	1988
Dickinson AFB, N.D.	321	1986	March AFB, Calif.	960	1980
Dover AFB, Del.	268	1974	Mather AFB, Calif.	1200	1979
Dyess AFB, Texas	7340	1981	Maxwell AFB, Ala.	1085	1984
Eaker AFB, Ark.	556	1982	McChord AFB, Wash.	577	1953
Edwards AFB, Calif.	6000	1982	McClellan AFB, Calif.	1200	1984
Eglin AFB, Fla.	1755	1972	McConnell AFB, Kan.	1090	1952
Eielson AFB, Alaska	3335	1979	McGuire AFB, N.J.	3453	1982
Ellsworth AFB, S.D.	3920	1990	Minot AFB, N.D.	145	1956
Elmendorf AFB, Alaska	1800	1980	Misawa AB, Japan	323	1985
England AFB, La.	1200	1958	Moody AFB, Ga.	902	1982
Fairchild AFB, Wash.	2464	1985	Mountain Home AFB, Idaho	2610	1974
F. E. Warren AFB, Wyo.	820	1987	Myrtle Beach AFB, S.C.	228	1959
Forsyth AFS, Mont.	212	1986	Nellis AFB, Nev.	603	1980
George AFB, Calif.	70	1972	Norton AFB, Calif.	56	1986
Gila Bend AFS, Ariz.	38	1960	Offutt AFB, Neb.	107	1976
Goodfellow AFB, Texas	213	1988	Osan AB, S. Korea	230	1982
Grand Forks AFB, N.D.	205	1960	Oslo, Norway	17	1986
Griffiss AFB, N.Y.	346	1976	Patrick AFB, Fla.	1365	1981
Grissom AFB, Ind.	417	1962	Peterson AFB, Colo.	1435	1976
Gunter AFB, Ala.	811	1973	Plattsburgh AFB, N.Y.	2367	1957
Hahn AB, Germany	1404	1987	Pope AFB, N.C.	381	1942
Hanscom AFB, Mass.	1614	1980	Powell AFS, Wyo.	200	1985
Havre AFS, Mont.	27	1986	RAF Alconbury, UK	648	1988
Hickam AFB, Hawaii	2093	1975	RAF Bentwaters, UK	521	1980
Hill AFB, Utah	400	1979	RAF Burtonwood, UK	232	unk
Holbrook AFS, Ariz.	1229	1980	RAF Chicksands, UK	354	1969
Holloman AFB, N.M.	787	1987	RAF Fairford, UK	669	1981
Homestead AFB, Fla.	920	1987	RAF Greenham Common, UK	163	1986

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u> (AFCOMS)	<u>BUILDING</u> <u>NUMBER</u>	<u>YEAR</u> <u>BUILT or</u> <u>OPENED</u>
RAF Lakenheath, UK	1081	1987
RAF Menwith Hill Station, UK	35	1990
RAF Mildenhall, UK	131	1989
RAF Sculthorpe, UK	250	@1960
RAF Upper Heyford, UK	32	1947
Ramstein AB, Germany	1200	1983
Randolph AFB, Texas	1075	1980
Reese AFB, Texas	535	1981
Rhein-Main AB, Germany	166	1986
Robins AFB, Ga.	660	1977
Royal Oaks, Spain	305	unk
San Vito de Normanni, Italy	415	1964
Scott AFB, Ill.	1980	1987
Sembach AB, Germany	88	1981
Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C.	3722	1981
Shaw AFB, S.C.	1419	1968
Sheppard AFB, Texas	120	1979
Soesterberg, Netherlands	44KVZ	1984
Spangdahlem AB, Germany	173	1985
Sondrestrom AB, Greenland (troop support only)***	unk	unk
Thule AB, Greenland (troop support only)***	unk	unk
Tinker AFB, Okla.	477	1979
Torrejon AB, Spain	112	1958
Travis AFB, Calif.	680	1945
Tyndall AFB, Fla.	950	1979
Vance AFB, Okla.	410	1984
Vandenberg AFB, Calif.	14300	1986
Vogelweh AB, Germany	2011	1952
Whiteman AFB, Mo.	411	1980
Wilder AFS, Idaho	50	1989
Williams AFB, Ariz.	790	1974
Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio	1250	1980
Wurtsmith AFB, Mich.	401	1990
Yokota AB, Japan	1214	1973
Zaragoza AB, Spain	1034	@1960

NOTES on AFCOMS stores:

* — located in downtown Athens; specifically, the Singrou section of Athens. The 1947-48 dates are according to Lt. Col (Ret) E. J. Janota, the store's first commissary officer; otherwise the earliest presently known documentation says 1956.

** — Camps Courtney, Foster, and Kinser were US Marine Corps bases, but their commissaries had been run by AFCOMS. Howard was an Air Force base, but the commissary was run by TSA.

*** — As indicated, these locations were for troop support only; there was no sales store.

STORES ACQUIRED FROM THE NAVY RESALE SERVICES SUPPORT OFFICE (NAVRESSO)

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u> (NAVRESSO)	<u>BUILDING</u> <u>NUMBER</u>	<u>YEAR</u> <u>BUILT or</u> <u>OPENED</u>
NAS Adak, Alaska	30027	1976
NAS Alameda, Calif.	152	1945
NS Annapolis, Md.	321	1979
Antigua, West Indies*	unk	unk
NS Argentia, Newfoundland	511M	1942
NSCS Athens, Ga.	37	1973
NAS Atsugi, Japan	139	1953
NSB Bangor, Wash.	2604	1983
NAS Barbers Point, Hawaii	152	1966
NAS Bermuda, Bermuda	329	1961
NAS Bermuda, Bermuda (annex)	A967 South	@1960
NAS Bermuda, Hampton Parish*	unk	unk
NF Brawdy, Wales (UK)*	416	unk
NSY Bremerton (Puget Sound), Wash.	464	1941
NAS Brunswick Annex, Maine	335	1973
NAS Cecil Field, Fla.	30	1942
NB Charleston, S.C.	655	1971
NWS Charleston, S.C.	725	1970
NAS Chase Field (Beeville), Texas	2978	1986
NWC China Lake, Calif.	19	1945
NAS Chinhae, S. Korea	S724	1960
NAS Corpus Christi, Texas	119	1941
NWSC Crane, Ind.	1894	1945
NCUC Cutler, Maine	502	1960
NSWC Dahlgren, Va.	112	1920
NSGA Edzell, Scotland	25	1939
NAS El Centro, Calif.	201	1966
Exmouth, Australia	161	@1973
FAS Fallon NAS, Nev.	84	1956
Gaeta, Italy*	705	unk
Governors Island USCG, N.Y.	680/4	1948
NTC Great Lakes, Ill.	3451	1981
NS Guam, Guam	257	1959
Guantanamo Bay, Cuba*	957	unk
NCBC Gulfport, Miss.	7	1942
NS Hamilton, DoD Housing Facility, Novato, Calif.	804	1942
Hario, Japan*	5113	unk
Holy Loch, Scotland (UK)	1 Queen St	unk
NAS Imperial Beach, Calif.	1264	1986
NAS Jacksonville, Fla.	951	1978
NAS Keflavik, Iceland	720	1972
NAS Key West, Fla.	V4111	1989

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u> (NAVERSSO)	<u>BUILDING</u> <u>NUMBER</u>	<u>YEAR</u> <u>BUILT or</u> <u>OPENED</u>
NSB Kings Bay, Ga.	1037	1985
NAS Kingsville, Texas	720	1942
NAEC Lakehurst, N.J.	485	1984
La Maddalena, Sardinia (Italy)*	201	unk
NAS Lemoore, Calif.	825	1961
Lisbon, Portugal*	unk	unk
NAB Little Creek, Va.	3324	1966
NS Long Beach, Calif.	677	1982
London, UK*	HQ7	unk
Machrihanish, Scotland (UK)*	72	unk
NS Mare Island, Calif.	1001	1980
NS Mayport, Fla.	460	@1966
NSA Memphis, Tenn.	782	1985
NAS Meridian, Miss.	214	1961
NAS Miramar, Calif.	M661	1983
NS Mitchel Field Annex, N.Y.	84	1940
NAS Moffett Field, Calif.	12	1933
Moron, Spain*	unk	@1965
NAS Naples, Italy	13	1961
Negishi Hts, Japan*	19045	unk
NSB New London, Conn.	484	1981
NSA New Orleans, La.	709	1976
NETC Newport, R.I.	1163	1975
NAS North Island, Calif.	620	1944
NB Norfolk, Va.	CD-7	1988
NAS Oceana, Va.	290	1978
NTC Orlando, Fla.	7151/53	1952
NAS Patuxent River, Md.	427	1943
NB Pearl Harbor, Hawaii	unk	1956
NAS Pensacola, Fla.	3745	1982
NS/NSY Philadelphia, Pa.	653	1943
Pinetamare, Italy*	627	unk
NAS Point Mugu, Calif.	123	1959
NCBC Point Hueneme, Calif.	50	1973
NNSY Portsmouth, Va.	350	1970
NS Rota, Spain	40	1957
NS Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico	1970	1979
Saint Magwan, UK*	627	unk
NS San Diego, Calif.	3379	1989
NTC San Diego, Calif.	1	1922
NCS San Miguel, Philippines	7310	@1972
NB Sasebo, Japan	1436	1978
NAU Scotia, N.Y.	606	1942
NS Seattle, Wash. (Sand Point)	193	1941
NAS Sigonella, Italy	193?	1981
NSGA Skaggs Island, Calif.	38	1954
Souda Bay, Crete (Greece)*	2	unk
NAS Staten Island, N.Y. (NE)	206	1960
NCS Stockton, Calif. (SW)	618	1945
NB Subic Bay, Philippines (NWP)	1109	@1960

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u> (NAVERSSO)	<u>BUILDING</u> <u>NUMBER</u>	<u>YEAR</u> <u>BUILT or</u> <u>OPENED</u>
Thurso, Scotland (UK)*	4/21	unk
NS Treasure Island, Calif. (SW)	34	1944
West Ruislip, UK*	101	unk
NAS Whidbey Island, Wash.	2742	1989
NAS Whiting Field, Fla.	H-19	1944
NSGA Winter Harbor, Maine	39	1953
NESC Yokosuka, Japan	H20CS	1989
NWS Yorktown, Va.	358	1942

* — These were referred to as "location stores" (later, NEXMARTs), staffed and operated by NEXCOM (Navy Exchange Service Command), with DeCA providing their groceries and funding for grocery personnel salaries.

STORES ACQUIRED FROM THE U.S. MARINE CORPS (USMC)

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u> (USMC)	<u>BUILDING</u> <u>NUMBER</u>	<u>YEAR</u> <u>BUILT or</u> <u>OPENED</u>
MCLB Albany, Ga.	7501	1982
MCLB Barstow, Calif.	364	1985
MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif.	22105	1952
MCAS Cherry Point, N.C.	3918	1982
MCAS El Toro, Calif.	694	1976
Hadnot Point, N.C. (at Camp Lejeune)	1200	1942
MCAS Iwakuni, Japan	450	1986
MCB Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii	374	1942
MCAS New River, N.C.	414	1955
MCRD Parris Island, S.C.	406	1981
MCB Quantico, Va.	3400	1973
San Onofre, Calif. (at Camp Pendleton)	51094	1977
Tarawa Terrace, N.C. (at Camp Lejeune)	2455	1952
MCAGCC Twentynine Palms, Calif.	1024	1988
MCAS Yuma, Ariz.	590	1975

STORE TOTALS:

- ◆ 174 Army
- ◆ 100 Navy (of these, 17 were location stores, also known as NEXMARTs; figure includes Bermuda Annex as a separate store.)
- ◆ 135 U.S. Air Force
- ◆ 3 U.S. Marine Corps run by U.S. Air Force
- ◆ 1 U.S. Air Force store run by the Army
- ◆ 2 U.S. Air Force troop support — only locations
- ◆ 15 U.S. Marine Corps
- 430 total**
- Less 17 Navy exchange/location stores (NEXMARTs) = **413**
- Less 2 Air Force troop support locations = **411**

**NEXMARTS (LOCATION STORES)
AS OF 1991 AND 2008**

	<u>1991</u>	<u>2007</u>
NAS Antigua, West Indies	Y	Closed Sep 1995
NAS Bermuda Annex	Y	Closed March 1993
NF Brawdy, Wales (UK)	Y	Closed Sep 1995
NSA Capodichino, Italy	N	Y*
NSA Gaeta, Italy	Y	Y
NS Guantanamo Bay, Cuba	Y	Y
Hario Housing, Japan (<i>aka FA Sasebo</i>)	Y	Closed Aug 1995**
NSO La Maddalena, Sardinia (<i>Italy</i>)	Y	Y
<i>(LaMaddalena scheduled to close Feb 2008)</i>		
NA Lisbon, Portugal	Y	Y
NSA London, England (UK)	Y	Closed June 2005
RAF Machrihanish, Scotland (UK)	Y	Closed April 1995
Moron AB, Spain	Y	Y
Negishi Heights, Japan	Y	Y
Pinetamare, Italy (<i>aka Caesarta</i>)	Y	Closed July 2002
NA Souda Bay, Crete (<i>Greece</i>)	Y	Y
JMF St. Mawgan, England (UK)	Y	Y
NCS Thurso, Scotland (UK)	Y	Closed Nov 1992
RAF West Ruislip, England (UK)	Y	Closed 2006
Total NEXMARTS open:	17	9

* — The Capodichino NEXMART replaced the one at Pinetamare

** — The Hario NEXMART closed when DeCA opened a Commissary there

Note:

Y = Yes, DeCA supported this store in the year indicated

N = DeCA did not support this store in the year indicated

Closed = this store closed before 2008

Appendix 12

Locations of DeCA's Commissaries (As of June 1, 2008)

OFF-POST STORES SERVING MULTIPLE BASES

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u>	<u>BUILDING NUMBER</u>	<u>YEAR BUILT or OPENED</u>
Anchorage Area, Alaska <i>(Elmendorf AFB, Fort Richardson)</i>	5800	1999

STORES SERVING ARMY POSTS

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u>	<u>BUILDING NUMBER</u>	<u>YEAR BUILT or OPENED</u>
Aberdeen PG, Maryland	3900	1994
Ansbach, Germany	5805	1938
ARDEC <i>(see Picatinny Arsenal)</i>		
Bamberg, Germany	7123	1925
Baumholder, Germany	8575	1977
Bitburg, Germany	77	1989
Cairo, Egypt	Essa Compound	1997
Camp Carroll, S. Korea	T136	1985
Camp Casey, S. Korea	S3030	1970
Camp Eagle, S. Korea	S-3406	2006
Camp Humphreys, S. Korea	101	2005
Camp Kure, Japan	S-250	1987
Camp Merrill, Ga.	25	1964
Camp Red Cloud, S. Korea	S-410	2002
Camp Stanley, S. Korea	T2467	1970
Camp Zama, Japan	680	1952
Carlisle Barracks, Pa.	861	1994
C. E. Kelly Spt Fac., Pa. <i>(Oakdale)</i>	S-1	1959
Chievres, Belgium	20120	1992
Darmstadt, Germany	4132	1952
Dexheim, Germany	6345	1989
Dugway PG, Utah	5114	1953
Fort Belvoir, Va.	2302	1982
Fort Benjamin Harrison, Ind. <i>(see Harrison Village)</i>		
Fort Benning, Ga.	9230	1974
Fort Bliss, Texas	1717	1979
Fort Bragg, N.C. (North Post)	8-5476	1974
Fort Bragg, N.C. (South Post)	23252	2000
Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico	689	2001
Fort Campbell, Ky.	2702	1976
Fort Carson, Colo.	1525	1972
Fort Detrick, Md.	1520	2008
Fort Drum, N.Y.	10730C	1988
Fort Eustis, Va.	1382	1992
Fort Gillem, Ga.	214	1942
Fort Gordon, Ga.	7200	1979

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u>	<u>BUILDING NUMBER</u>	<u>YEAR BUILT or OPENED</u>
Fort Greely, Alaska	601	1956
Fort Hamilton, N.Y.	115	2000
Fort Hood, Texas #1: Clear Creek	50001	1975
Fort Hood, Texas #2: Warrior Way	85020	1994
Fort Huachuca, Ariz.	61610	1978
Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif.	S-182	1991
Fort Irwin, Calif.	920	1988
Fort Jackson, S.C.	4716	1985
Fort Knox, Ky.	121	1974
Fort Leavenworth, Kan.	691	1983
Fort Lee, Va.	1600	1979
Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.	485	1991
Fort Lewis, Wash.	5275	1986
Fort McCoy, Wis.	1537	2007
Fort McPherson, Ga.	365	1999
Fort Meade, Md.	2786	1986
Fort Monmouth, N.J.	1007	1998
Fort Myer, Va.	409	1994
Fort Ord, Calif. <i>(see Ord Community commissary)</i>		
Fort Polk, La.	830	1976
Fort Riley, Kan.	2310	1997
Fort Rucker, Ala.	9213	1969
Fort Sam Houston, Texas	360	1994
Fort Sill, Okla.	1719	1975
Fort Stewart, Ga.	421	1978
Fort Wainwright, Alaska	3703	1990
Garmisch, Germany	212	2002
Grafenwoehr, Germany	700	2007
Hanau, Germany	500	1986
Hannam Village, S. Korea	1002	1968
Harrison Village, Ind. <i>(old Fort Benjamin Harrison)</i>	9702A	2007
Heidelberg, Germany	4814	2000
Hohenfels, Germany	749	1994
Hunter AAF, Ga.	6025	1995
Idar Oberstein, Germany	9025	1938
Illesheim, Germany	6509	1936
Kelley Barracks, Germany	3316	1925
Livorno, Italy <i>(Camp Darby)</i>	725	1953
Mannheim, Germany	200	1998
Neubrucke, Germany	9944	1954
Ord Community Commissary <i>(old Fort Ord, Calif.)</i>	4240	1973
Panzer Barracks, Germany	2957	1988
Patch Barracks, Germany	2350	1988
Picatinny Arsenal (ARDEC), N.J.	3323	1998
Redstone Arsenal, Ala.	3224	1979
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia	0-1	1965

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u>	<u>BUILDING NUMBER</u>	<u>YEAR BUILT or OPENED</u>	<u>NAME, LOCATION</u>	<u>BUILDING NUMBER</u>	<u>YEAR BUILT or OPENED</u>
Rock Island Arsenal, Ill.	334	1974	Gunter AFB, Ala.	811	1973
Sagami Depot, Japan	T-8011	1960	Hanscom AFB, Mass.	1709A	2002
Sagamihara, Japan	S-114	1986	Hickam AFB, Hawaii	2093	1975
Schinnen, Netherlands	T-25	1976	Hill AFB, Utah	400	1979
Schofield Barracks, Hawaii	698	1997	Holloman AFB, N.M.	787	1987
Schweinfurt, Germany	502	1958	Hurlburt Field, Fla.	91013	1958
Taegu, S. Korea (<i>Camp Walker</i>)	S-357	1997	Incirlik AB, Turkey	877	1988
Tobyhanna AD, Pa.	816	1943	Izmir AS, Turkey	20	1955
Vicenza, Italy	290	1999	Kadena AB, Okinawa (<i>Japan</i>)	407	1981
Vilseck, Germany	2204	1989	Keesler AFB, Miss.	3401	1972
Walter Reed AMC, Md.	162	1971	Kirtland AFB, N.M.	20180	1988
West Point, N.Y.	1200	1989	Kunsan AB, S. Korea	1115	2004
White Sands Missile Range, N.M.	890	1995	Lackland AFB, Texas	8400	1976
Wiesbaden, Germany	765	1952	Lajes Field, Azores (<i>Portugal</i>)	T-326	1989
Wuerzburg, Germany	47	1989	Langley AFB, Va.	291	1979
Yongsan, S. Korea	5420	1988	Laughlin AFB, Texas	352	1958
Yuma PG, Ariz.	536	1988	Little Rock AFB, Ark.	790	1980
			Los Angeles AFB, Calif.	251	1983
			Luke AFB, Ariz.	1550	1974
			MacDill AFB, Fla.	925	1987
			Malmstrom AFB, Mont.	1320	1988
			March ARB, Calif.	15150	1993
			Maxwell AFB, Ala.	1085	1984
			McChord AFB, Wash.	577	1974
			McClellan, Calif.	1200	1984
			McConnell AFB, Kan.	313	1997
			McGuire AFB, N.J.	3453	1982
			Minot AFB, N.D.	246	1993
			Misawa AB, Japan	323	1985
			Moody AFB, Ga.	902	1982
			Mountain Home AFB, Idaho	2706	1997
			Nellis AFB, Nev.	603	1980
			Offutt AFB, Neb.	107	1974
			Osan AB, S. Korea	230	1982
			Patrick AFB, Fla.	1365	1981
			Peterson AFB, Colo.	2019	2007
			RAF Alconbury, UK	648	1988
			RAF Croughton, UK	076	1995
			RAF Fairford, UK	669	1981
			RAF Lakenheath, UK	1081	1987
			RAF Menwith Hill Station, UK	35	1990
			RAF Mildenhall, UK	131	1989
			Ramstein AB, Germany	1200	1983
			Randolph AFB, Texas	1075	1980
			Robins AFB (<i>Warner Robins</i>), Ga.	660	1977
			Scott AFB, Ill.	1980	1987
			Selfridge ANGB, Mich.	701	1991
			Sembach AB, Germany	88	1981
			Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C.	3722	1981

STORES SERVING AIR FORCE BASES

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u>	<u>BUILDING NUMBER</u>	<u>YEAR BUILT or OPENED</u>	<u>NAME, LOCATION</u>	<u>BUILDING NUMBER</u>	<u>YEAR BUILT or OPENED</u>
Air Force Academy, Colo.	526	1992	MacDill AFB, Fla.	925	1987
Altus AFB, Okla.	16	1986	Malmstrom AFB, Mont.	1320	1988
Andersen AFB, Guam	22021	1955	March ARB, Calif.	15150	1993
Andrews AFB, Md.	1684	1981	Maxwell AFB, Ala.	1085	1984
Ankara AS, Turkey	2285	2000	McChord AFB, Wash.	577	1974
Arnold AFB, Tenn.	125	1982	McClellan, Calif.	1200	1984
Aviano AB, Italy	1411	2000	McConnell AFB, Kan.	313	1997
Bangor ANGB, Maine	420	1987	McGuire AFB, N.J.	3453	1982
Barksdale AFB, La.	4765	1978	Minot AFB, N.D.	246	1993
Beale AFB, Calif.	25608	1992	Misawa AB, Japan	323	1985
Bolling AFB, D.C.	4570	1990	Moody AFB, Ga.	902	1982
Buckley AFB, Colo.	1	2002	Mountain Home AFB, Idaho	2706	1997
Cannon AFB, N.M.	77A	1980	Nellis AFB, Nev.	603	1980
Charleston AFB, S.C.	1991	2003	Offutt AFB, Neb.	107	1974
Columbus AFB, Ga.	160B	1981	Osan AB, S. Korea	230	1982
Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.	2615	1977	Patrick AFB, Fla.	1365	1981
Dover AFB, Del.	268	1974	Peterson AFB, Colo.	2019	2007
Dyess AFB, Texas	7340	1981	RAF Alconbury, UK	648	1988
Edwards AFB, Calif.	6000	1982	RAF Croughton, UK	076	1995
Eglin AFB, Fla.	1755	1993	RAF Fairford, UK	669	1981
Eielson AFB, Alaska	3335	1979	RAF Lakenheath, UK	1081	1987
Ellsworth AFB, S.D.	3920	1990	RAF Menwith Hill Station, UK	35	1990
Fairchild AFB, Wash.	2464	1985	RAF Mildenhall, UK	131	1989
F. E. Warren AFB, Wyo.	820	1987	Ramstein AB, Germany	1200	1983
Goodfellow AFB, Texas	213	1988	Randolph AFB, Texas	1075	1980
Grand Forks AFB, N.D.	241	2004	Robins AFB (<i>Warner Robins</i>), Ga.	660	1977
			Scott AFB, Ill.	1980	1987
			Selfridge ANGB, Mich.	701	1991
			Sembach AB, Germany	88	1981
			Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C.	3722	1981

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u>	<u>BUILDING NUMBER</u>	<u>YEAR BUILT or OPENED</u>	<u>NAME, LOCATION</u>	<u>BUILDING NUMBER</u>	<u>YEAR BUILT or OPENED</u>
Shaw AFB, S.C.	1420	1993	NAB Little Creek, Va.	3445	1993
Sheppard AFB, Texas	120	1979	NS Mayport, Fla.	1900	1992
Spangdahlem AB, Germany	173	1985	NSA Memphis, Tenn.	782	1985
Tinker AFB, Okla.	477	1979	NAS Meridian, Miss.	431	1998
Travis AFB, Calif.	680	1945	Mineo, Sicily (Italy)	0D2	1999
Tyndall AFB, Fla.	950	1979	NAS Miramar, Calif.	M661	1983
Vance AFB, Okla.	410	1984	NS Mitchel Field Annex, N.Y.	84	1940
Vandenberg AFB, Calif.	14300	1986	NAS Moffett Field, Calif.	12	1933
Vogelweh AB, Germany	2030	1997	NSA Naples, Italy	2091	2005
Whiteman AFB, Mo.	411	1980	NSB New London, Conn.	484	1981
Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio	1250	1980	NSA New Orleans, La.	709	1976
Yokota AB, Japan	570	2001	NS Newport, R.I.	1163	1975

STORES SERVING NAVY AND COAST GUARD BASES

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u>	<u>BUILDING NUMBER</u>	<u>YEAR BUILT or OPENED</u>	<u>NAME, LOCATION</u>	<u>BUILDING NUMBER</u>	<u>YEAR BUILT or OPENED</u>
Annapolis, Md.	321	1979	NAS North Island, Calif.	2017	2000
NSCS Athens, Ga.	37	1973	NAS Oceana, Va.	3070	2001
NAF Atsugi, Japan	1306	1995	NS Orote, Guam	275	1995
Bangor Commissary,			NAS Patuxent River, Md.	2173	1993
NB Kitsap, Wash.	2604	1983	NB Pearl Harbor, Hawaii	617	2002
NAS Barbers Point, Hawaii	152	1966	NAS Pensacola, Fla.	3961	1997
Bremerton Commissary			NCBC Port Hueneme, Calif.	50	1997
NB Kitsap, Wash.	990	1993	(NB Ventura County)		
NAS Brunswick Annex, Maine	335	1973	NNSY Portsmouth		
NWS Charleston, S.C.	764	2000	(Scott Annex), Va.	350	1970
NAWC China Lake, Calif.	02023	1996	NSY Portsmouth, Maine/N.H.	167	1995
NAS Chinhae, S. Korea	S724	1960	NSY Puget Sound (see Bremerton)		
NAS Corpus Christi, Texas	337	1994	NS Rota, Spain	3300B	2007
NWSC Crane, Ind.	1894	1945	NB San Diego, Calif.	3629	2007
NSWC Dahlgren, Va.	118	1995	NB Sasebo, Japan	1436	1978
NAF El Centro, Calif.	210	1996	NAU Scotia, N.Y.	606	1942
NAS Fallon, Nev.	34	1992	NSS Sigonella, Sicily (Italy)	225	2002
NASJRB Fort Worth, Texas	1765	2008	NSC Smokey Point		
(formerly Carswell AFB)			(NB Everett), Wash.	900	1995
NS Great Lakes, Ill.	3451	1981	NSGA Sugar Grove, W. Va.	30	2001
NCBC Gulfport, Miss.*	32	2000*	NAS Whidbey Island, Wash.	2742	1989
Hario Village, Japan	5127	1995	NAS Whiting Field, Fla.	3060	1993
(new commissary replaced Nexmart)			NFA Yokosuka, Japan	H20CS	1989
NAS Imperial Beach, Calif.	1264	1986			
NAS Jacksonville, Fla.	951	1978			
NAS Key West, Fla.	V4111	1989			
NSB Kings Bay, Ga.	1037	1985			
NAS Kingsville, Texas	4764	1993			
NB Kitsap (See Bangor and Bremerton)					
USCGS Kodiak, Alaska**	N-27	1996**			
NAEC Lakehurst, N.J.	485	1984			
NAS Lemoore, Calif.	825	1999			

Notes to Navy section:

* — Destroyed by Hurricane Katrina, 2005; rebuilt and reopened 2006.

** — DeCA assumed operation from Coast Guard in 1996; store was already in place.

STORES SERVING U.S. MARINE CORPS BASES

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u>	<u>BUILDING NUMBER</u>	<u>YEAR BUILT or OPENED</u>
MCLB Albany, Ga.	7501	1982
MCLB Barstow, Calif.	364	1985
Camp Courtney, Okinawa (<i>Japan</i>)	4131	1987
Camp Foster, Okinawa (<i>Japan</i>)	5675	1987
Camp Kinser, Okinawa (<i>Japan</i>)	1227	1990
MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C.	1230	1993
MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif.	20850	1993
MCAS Cherry Point, N.C.	3918	1982
MCAS Iwakuni, Japan	450	1986
MCB Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii	6088	1993
MCAS New River, N.C.	AS4055	2002
MCRD Parris Island, S.C.	407	1996
MCB Quantico, Va.	3400	1973
San Onofre, Calif. (<i>at Camp Pendleton</i>)	51094	1977
MCAGCC Twentynine Palms, Calif.	1025	2004
MCAS Yuma, Ariz.	590	1975

Appendix 13

Commissary Openings and Closings Under DeCA, 1991 - 2008

Note: Annexes and branches are listed as separate stores. Fiscal year runs from October 1 to September 30.

STORE OPENINGS, CHRONOLOGICAL

Fiscal Year 1992

Jan. 30, 1992 **Fort Eustis, Va.**
 April 14, 1992 **Fort Detrick, Md.** (*new site, remodeled building*)
 June 2, 1992 **NS Mayport, Fla.**
 Sept. 14, 1992 **NS Fallon, Nev.**
 Sept. 15, 1992 **Beale AFB, Calif.**
 Sept. 15, 1992 **U.S. Air Force Academy, Colo.**

FY 1993

Dec. 15, 1992 **Chievres, Belgium**
 Jan. 12, 1993 **NAS Whiting Field, Fla.**
 Feb. 17, 1993 **NAB Little Creek, Va.**
 March 19, 1993 **Camp Pendleton, Calif.**
 March 23, 1993 **NAS Patuxent River, Md.**
 May 4, 1993 **Eglin AFB, Fla.**
 May 6, 1993 **Shaw AFB, S.C.**
 May 12, 1993 **MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C.**
 June 22, 1993 **MCB Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii**
 July 13, 1993 **March AFB, Calif.**
 Aug. 3, 1993 **Minot AFB, N.D.**
 Aug. 27, 1993 **NAS Kingsville, Texas**
 Sept. 30, 1993 **Bremerton, Wash.** (*Puget Sound Naval Shipyard; the commissary is now called NB Kitsap-Bremerton*)

FY 1994

Jan. 25, 1994 **Hohenfels, Germany**
 March 8, 1994 **Aberdeen PG, Md.**
 March 16, 1994 **Costanzo, Sicily (Italy; new site; remodeled building)**
 April 11, 1994 **Fort Hood II, Texas (Warrior Way)**
 Aug. 16, 1994 **RAF Croughton, UK (new site, remodeled building)**
 Sept. 20, 1994 **Fort Sam Houston, Texas**

FY 1995

Oct. 18, 1994 **Fort Ritchie, Md.**
 Nov. 8, 1994 **Fort Myer, Va.**
 Nov. 15, 1994 **Carlisle Barracks, Pa.**
 Nov. 15, 1994 **NAS Corpus Christi, Texas**
 May 16, 1995 **White Sands MR, N.M.**
 June 6, 1995 **NSWC Dahlgren, Va.**
 June 13, 1995 **NAF Atsugi, Japan**
 June 27, 1995 **Smokey Point (NS Everett), Wash. (new site, new store)**
 June 27, 1995 **Hunter AAF, Ga.**
 July 18, 1995 **NSY Portsmouth, Maine/N.H. (new site, remodeled bldg)**
 Aug. 15, 1995 **Hario, Japan (to replace old Nexmart)**
 Sept. 12, 1995 **NS Orote, Guam**
 Sept. 26, 1995 **RAF Croughton, UK (replaced earlier new store)**

FY 1996

Oct. 1, 1995 **USCG Kodiak, Alaska** (*not a new store, but new to DeCA. Unofficially assumed responsibility for this store from Coast Guard*)
 Nov. 1, 1995 **Giebelstadt, Germany** (*not a new store; reopened after 6-month test to combine exchange and commissary into shopette-plus*)
 Feb. 13, 1996 **NAWC China Lake, Calif.**
 April 23, 1996 **MCRD Parris Island, S.C.**

FY 1997

Oct. 9, 1996 **USCG Kodiak, Alaska**, (*now, after more than a year, store officially transferred to DeCA; see entry for Oct. 1, 95*)
 Nov. 19, 1996 **NAF El Centro, Calif.**
 Jan. 24, 1997 **Vogelweh AB, Germany**
 March 9, 1997 **Cairo, Egypt**
 Feb. 19, 1997 **Mountain Home AFB, Idaho**
 March 13, 1997 **NCBC Port Hueneme, Calif.**
 April 29, 1997 **Fort Riley, Kan.**
 May 14, 1997 **Schofield Barracks, Hawaii**
 May 20, 1997 **McConnell AFB, Kan.**
 July 29, 1997 **Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico**
 Aug. 26, 1997 **Taegu, S. Korea (Camp Walker)**

FY 1998

Dec. 16, 1997 **NAS Pensacola, Fla.**
 July 21, 1998 **Fort Monmouth, N.J.**
 Aug. 18, 1998 **Mannheim, Germany**

FY 1999

Oct. 15, 1998 **Gricignano, Italy (new site: temporary pre-fab store, waiting for new Naples store to be completed nearby)**
 Nov. 3, 1998 **ARDEC (Picatinny Arsenal), N.J.**
 Dec. 8, 1998 **NAS Meridian, Miss.**
 Jan. 20, 1999 **NAS Lemoore, Calif.**
 May 4, 1999 **Fort McPherson, Ga.**
 Sept. 15, 1999 **Camp Howze, S. Korea (new site; renovated existing building)**
 Sept. 24, 1999 **Anchorage Area, Alaska (consolidation of Elmendorf and Fort Richardson stores)**

FY 2000

Oct. 12, 1999 **Mineo, Sicily (Italy; new site, new building)**
 Nov. 10, 1999 **Vicenza, Italy**
 Jan. 11, 2000 **Heidelberg, Germany**
 March 7, 2000 **Fort Hamilton, N.Y.**
 April 18, 2000 **NCBC Gulfport, Miss.**
 June 27, 2000 **Fort Bragg South Post, N.C.**
 Aug. 31, 2000 **Ankara American Support Facility, Turkey (new site, renovated building)**

FY 2001

Nov. 7, 2000 Aviano AB, Italy
 Nov. 7, 2000 NWS Charleston, S.C.
 Nov. 14, 2000 NAS North Island, Calif.
 April 3, 2001 NAS Oceana, Va.
 May 30, 2001 NSGA Sugar Grove, W.Va. (*new site*)

FY 2002

Oct. 24, 2001 Yokota AB, Japan
 Nov. 13, 2001 Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico
 Feb. 16, 2002 Buckley ANGB, Col. (*new site*)
 March 12, 2002 MCAS New River, N.C.
 April 16, 2002 Hanscom AFB, Mass.
 May 8, 2002 Garmisch, Germany (*at a new site at Garmisch, in a renovated building*)
 May 31, 2002 NAS Sigonella, Sicily

FY 2003

Oct. 25, 2002 NS Pearl Harbor, Hawaii
 Nov. 23, 2002 Camp Red Cloud, S. Korea (*new site, renovated facility*)
 June 13, 2003 Charleston AFB, S.C.

FY 2004

Feb. 19, 2004 Twentynine Palms, Calif.
 June 16, 2004 Kunsan AB, S. Korea
 July 13, 2004 Grand Forks AFB, N.D.

FY 2005

March 3, 2005 Camp Humphreys, S. Korea
 May 7, 2005 NSA Naples, Italy
 (*replaced old Naples and Gricignano stores*)

FY 2006

Aug. 30, 2006 Camp Eagle, S. Korea (*new site*)

FY 2007

April 10, 2007 Fort McCoy, Wisc.
 April 20, 2007 NB San Diego, Calif.
 June 20, 2007 Harrison Village, Ind.
 Aug. 3, 2007 Peterson AFB, Colo.
 Sept. 26, 2007 Graffenwohr, Germany

NOTE: Total new stores opened, to end of FY 2007: 95
 Includes one location inherited from Coast Guard,
 and several new stores that opened in converted facilities

FY 2008

Nov. 9, 2007 NB Rota, Spain
 March 25, 2008 NASJRB Fort Worth, Texas
 April 8, 2008 Fort Detrick, Md.

STORE CLOSURES, CHRONOLOGICAL

BRAC = Closed by base closure and realignment action

SVC = Closed by services

CFE = Base Closure Decision by Conventional Forces Europe

DeCA = Closed by DeCA

GDPR = Global Defense Posture Realignment (supersedes CFE)

FY 1990 (pre-DeCA):

May 1990 Osterholz-Scharmbeck, Germany
 June 1990 RAF Weathersfield, UK
 July 14, 1990 Rheinburg, Germany
 Aug. 31, 1990 Berchtesgaden, Germany

FY 1991 (pre-DeCA) - 10 OCONUS/1 CONUS

November 1990	Hellenikon, Greece*	CFE
Jan. 5, 1991	Helmstedt, Germany	CFE
Feb 1, 1991	Neckarsulm, Germany	CFE
March 15, 1991	Pease AFB, N.H.	SVC
May 31, 1991	Neu Ulm, Germany	CFE
June 14, 1991	Decimomannu, Italy	CFE
June 29, 1991	Schwaebisch Gmeund, Germany	CFE
July 15, 1991	Comiso AB, Italy (Sicily)	CFE
July 31, 1991	Clark AB, Philippines**	SVC
Aug. 1, 1991	Hessisch-Oldendorf, Germany	CFE
Aug. 10, 1991	Bad Toelz, Germany	CFE

* — Hellenikon: Located at Hellenikon AB, adjoining the Athens airport, this store should not be confused with the downtown store in Athens, which remained open until 1995.

** — Clark: the U.S. government had been negotiating with the Philippines to extend leases on U.S. bases there, but there was a great deal of Philippine opposition to any extensions. As a result, when Mt. Pinatubo erupted and inflicted extensive damage on Clark and other bases, the U.S. decided to simply shut Clark down and move out. San Miguel and Subic Bay were soon to follow.

**COMMISSARIES CLOSED UNDER DECA,
1 OCT 1991 – 1 JUNE 2008****FY 1992**

Nov. 14, 1991	San Miguel, Philippines	SVC
Jan. 4, 1992	Goeppingen, Germany	CFE
Feb. 1, 1992	Schwabach, Germany	CFE
March 1, 1992	Holy Loch, Scotland	CFE
April 1, 1992	Herzo Base, Germany	CFE
April 25, 1992	Amberg, Germany	CFE
May 15, 1992	Bueren, Germany	CFE
May 15, 1992	Soegel, Germany	CFE
May 15, 1992	Flensburg, Germany	CFE
May 27, 1992	Muenster, Germany	CFE
June 1, 1992	RAF Burtonwood, UK	CFE
June 1, 1992	Pruem, Germany	CFE

**COMMISSARIES CLOSED UNDER DECA,
1 OCT 1991 – 1 JUNE 2008 (continued)**

FY 1992

June 13, 1992	Fischbach, Germany	CFE
June 27, 1992	Bindlach, Germany	CFE
July 15, 1992	Zaragoza AB, Spain	CFE
July 31, 1992	Eaker AFB, Ark.	BRAC 91
July 31, 1992	Exmouth, Australia	CFE
July 31, 1992	RAF Greenham Common, UK	CFE
Aug. 15, 1992	Garlstedt, Germany	CFE
Aug. 23, 1992	Homestead AFB, Fla. (Hurricane Andrew destruction)	SVC
Aug. 26, 1992	RAF Sculthorpe, UK	CFE
Aug. 29, 1992	Munich, Germany	CFE
Aug. 29, 1992	Heilbronn, Germany	CFE
Aug. 29-30, 1992	Wertheim, Germany	CFE
Sept. 13, 1992	NB Subic Bay, Philippines	SVC
Sept. 30, 1992	Royal Oaks AB, Spain	CFE

FY 1993

Oct. 15, 1992	England AFB, La.	BRAC 91
Nov. 14, 1992	George AFB, Calif.	BRAC
Dec. 31, 1992	NAS Chase Field, Beeville, Texas	BRAC 91
Jan. 31, 1993	Myrtle Beach AFB, S.C.	BRAC 91
Feb. 20, 1993	NSGA Skaggs Island, Sonoma, Calif. (housing area closed)	SVC
March 20, 1993	Robinson Barracks, Germany	CFE
March 31, 1993	Wurtsmith AFB, Mich.	BRAC 91
March 31, 1993	NAS Bermuda (annex) (main store remained open; this was not counted as a closure on some reference list)	
April 29, 1993	Conrad AFS, Mont.	SVC
May 9, 1993	Tarawa Terrace, N.C. (replaced by new Camp Lejeune store, 12 May 93)	
May 10, 1993	Hadnot Point, N.C. (replaced by new Camp Lejeune store, 12 May 93)	
May 15, 1993	Bremerhaven, Germany	CFE
May 29, 1993	Zweibrucken, Germany	CFE
May 30, 1993	Havre AFS, Mont.	SVC
June 15, 1993	Hahn AB, Germany	CFE
June 30, 1993	Williams AFB, Ariz.	BRAC 91
June 30, 1993	Schwaebisch Hall, Germany	CFE
July 10, 1993	Carswell AFB, Texas	BRAC 91
July 31, 1993	Chanute AFB, Ill.	BRAC 91
July 31, 1993	Bergstrom AFB, Texas	BRAC 91
Aug. 14/18, 1993	Seneca Army Depot, N.Y.	SVC
Aug. 15, 1993	RAF Bentwaters, UK	CFE
Aug. 31, 1993	Mather AFB, Calif.	BRAC 91
Sept. 4, 1993	Crailsheim, Germany	CFE

FY 1994

Oct. 16, 1993	Wildflecken II, Germany (temporarily closed)	
April 25, 1994	Wildflecken II, Germany (temporarily reopened)	
May 14, 1994	Wildflecken II, Germany (permanently closed)	CFE
Oct. 31, 1993	Holbrook AFS, Ariz.	SVC
Nov. 6, 1993	Germersheim, Germany	CFE
Nov. 13, 1993	Bad Hersfeld, Germany	CFE
Dec. 30, 1993	Fleigerhorst, Germany	SVC
Jan. 11, 1994	Erlangen, Germany	CFE
Jan. 15, 1994	Avon Park AFS, Fla. (realignment)	SVC
Jan. 22, 1994	Regensburg, Germany (closed when new Hobenfels store opened)	SVC
Jan. 31, 1994	Norton AFB, Calif.	BRAC 91
March 1, 1994	Landstuhl, Germany	SVC
March 3, 1994	Edgewood Arsenal, Md. (closed when new Aberdeen store opened)	DeCA
April 30, 1994	Wildflecken, Germany	CFE
April 30, 1994	Iraklion AS, Crete (Greece)	CFE
May 17, 1994	Ankara AS, Turkey	CFE
May 28, 1994	Lexington-Bluegrass AD, Ky.	BRAC 91
June 1, 1994	Torreon AB, Spain	CFE
June 4, 1994	Fulda, Germany	CFE
June 30, 1994	NS Adak, Alaska	CFE
June 30, 1994	NF Argentia, Newfoundland	SVC
Jan. 30, 1994	Wilder AFS, Idaho	SVC
July 16, 1994	Soesterberg AB, Germany	SVC
July 19, 1994	NS Staten Island, N.Y.	BRAC 91
July 23, 1994	Oslo, Norway	SVC
July 30, 1994	Fort Sheridan, Ill.	BRAC 91
July 30, 1994	Grissom AFB, Ind.	BRAC 91
July 30, 1994	San Vito AB, Italy	CFE
July 31, 1994	Lowry AFB, Colo.	BRAC 91
Aug. 13, 1994	RAF Upper Heyford, UK	CFE
Aug. 13, 1994	Dickinson AFS, N.D.	SVC
Aug. 14, 1994	Berlin, Germany	CFE
Aug. 31, 1994	Loring AFB, Maine	BRAC 91
Sept. 15, 1994	Gila Bend AFAS, Ariz.	SVC
Sept. 30, 1994	Camp King, Germany	SVC

FY 1995

Oct. 28, 1994	Trier, Germany	SVC
Oct. 29, 1994	NWS Yorktown, Va.	DeCA
Jan. 1, 1995	Fort Story, Va.	DeCA
Jan. 21, 1995	Cameron Station, Va.	BRAC 88
Jan. 23, 1995	Giebelstadt, Germany (shopette-plus test; later reopened)	DeCA
Jan. 31, 1995	NS Mare Island, Calif.	BRAC 93
April 1, 1995	Fort McNair, D.C.	DeCA
April 29, 1995	Frankfurt, Germany	CFE
April 29, 1995	NS Charleston, S.C.	BRAC 93
June 3, 1995	NS Seattle (Sand Point), Wash. (replaced by new store at Everett [Smokey Point], Wash.)	BRAC 88
June 3, 1995	RAF Chicksands, UK	CFE

June 21, 1995	Athens, Greece (<i>downtown store</i>)	SVC	<u>FY 2000</u>		
June 24, 1995	Mainz, Germany	CFE	June 17, 2000	Mallonee Village, N.C. (Fort Benning)	DeCA
June 30, 1995	Griffiss AFB, N.Y.	BRAC 93	Sept. 30, 2000	MCAS El Toro, Calif.	BRAC 93
June 30, 1995	NAS Bermuda	SVC	Sept. 30, 2000	Fort McClellan, Ala.	BRAC 95
June 30, 1995	Plattsburgh AFB, N.Y.	BRAC 93	Sept. 30, 2000	C.M. Price Support Center, Ill.	BRAC 95
July 1, 1995	Castle AFB, Calif.	BRAC 91		(<i>aka Granite City</i>)	
July 1, 1995	K.I. Sawyer AFB, Mich.	BRAC 93			
July 31, 1995	Powell AFS, Wyo.	SVC	<u>FY 2001</u>		
July 31, 1995	Forsyth AFS, Mont.	SVC	Nov. 30, 2000	Dhahran, Saudi Arabia	SVC
Aug. 1, 1995	Fort Espinar, Panama	SVC	April 15, 2001	DSCR (Bellwood), Va.	DeCA
Aug. 1, 1995	Karlsruhe, Germany	SVC	April 15, 2001	Kelly AFB, Texas	BRAC
Aug. 6, 1995	Fuerth, Germany	CFE	April 15, 2001	Pope AFB, N.C.	DeCA
Sept. 30, 1995	NS Philadelphia, Pa.	BRAC 91	April 15, 2001	Sierra AD, Calif.	BRAC
			Sept. 1, 2001	Bad Krueznach, Germany	CFE
			Sept. 28, 2001	Brooks AFB, Texas	SVC
			Sept. 29, 2001	NCTS Cutler, Maine	SVC

* Giebelstadt: 6-month test to try combining exchange and commissary into a Shopette Plus

<u>FY 1996</u>			<u>FY 2002</u>		
May 25, 1996	Belle Fourche AFS, S.D.	SVC	Feb. 17, 2002	Fitzsimons AMC, Colo.	BRAC 93
Aug. 31, 1996	La Junta AFS, Colo.	SVC	June 1, 2002	Fort Shafter, Hawaii	DeCA
Aug. 31, 1996	Governors Island CGS, N.Y.	SVC	June 1, 2002	NSGA Winter Harbor, Maine	SVC
March 29, 1997	NASG Edzell, Scotland	CFE	June 1, 2002	Presidio of San Francisco, Calif.	DeCA
June 16, 1997	Kirchgoens, Germany (<i>realignment</i>)	USAREUR	July 1, 2002	DDRE/New Cumberland, Pa.	DeCA
July 19, 1997	NS Long Beach, Calif.	BRAC 91	July 31, 2002	Costanzo, Italy	SVC
July 26, 1997	NAS Alameda, Calif.	BRAC 93			
July 31, 1997	Pirmasens, Germany	CFE	<u>FY 2003</u>		
July 31, 1997	NS Treasure Island, Calif.	BRAC 93	Oct. 1, 2002	Point Mugu/NB Ventura County, Calif.	DeCA
Aug. 2, 1997	Reese AFB, Texas	BRAC 91	Aug. 1, 2003	Fort Monroe, Phoebus/ Old Point Comfort, Va.	DeCA
Aug. 9, 1997	Fort Devens, Mass.	BRAC 91			
Aug. 30, 1997	Vint Hill Farms Station, Va.	BRAC 93			
Sept. 13, 1997	DoD Hamilton Housing, Calif.	BRAC 93	<u>FY 2004</u>		
			March 31, 2004	Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico	SVC
			June 30, 2004	Bad Aibling, Germany	SVC

NOTE: NTC San Diego, Calif., was scheduled to close in FY97, but it did not; the Marines wanted it to serve their San Diego location; matter was still unresolved at end of FY97. All potential arrangements ultimately fell through and the facility was closed in FY98.

<u>FY 1998</u>			<u>FY 2005</u>		
Feb. 7, 1998	NTC San Diego, Calif.	BRAC	Nov. 17, 2004	Camp Howze, S. Korea	SVC
Aug. 1, 1998	Fort Ritchie, Md.	BRAC	March 31, 2005	Camp Page, S. Korea	SVC
Sept. 1, 1998	NCS Stockton, Calif.	SVC	May 6, 2005	NSA Naples, Italy	SVC
Aug. 29, (or Sep 15) 1998	Augsburg, Germany	CFE	May 6, 2005	Gricignano, Italy	DeCA
				(<i>new Naples store took the place of the Gricignano and the old Naples stores</i>)	
<u>FY 1999</u>			Aug. 31, 2005	Aschaffenburg, Germany	SVC
Dec. 31, 1998	NTC Orlando, Fla.	BRAC 93	Sept. 30, 2005	Rhein Main AB, Germany	CFE
Jan. 31, 1999	NAS Cecil Field, Fla.	BRAC 93			
April 30, 1999	Oakland Army Base, Calif.	BRAC 95	<u>FY 2006</u>		
July 11/31, 1999	Worms, Germany	SVC	July 14, 2006	Bad Kissingen, Germany	SVC
Aug. 31, 1999	Corozal, Panama	SVC	July 15, 2006	Pusan, S. Korea	SVC
Sept. 12, 1999	Camp Edwards, S. Korea	DeCA	Aug. 14, 2006	NAS Keflavik, Iceland	SVC
Sept. 15, 1999	Howard AB, Panama	SVC	Aug. 31, 2006	Giebelstadt, Germany	SVC
Sept. 19, 1999	Elmendorf AFB, Alaska	DeCA	Aug. 31, 2006	Kitzingen, Germany	SVC
Sept. 23, 1999	Fort Richardson, Alaska	DeCA	<u>FY 2007</u>		
			Nov. 1, 2006	Babenhausen, Germany	SVC

June 1, 2007	Bad Nauheim, Germany	SVC
July 13, 2007	McCully Barracks, Germany	SVC
Sept. 1, 2007	Giessen, Germany	SVC

FY 2008

Oct. 12, 2007	Buedingen, Germany	SVC
Oct. 12, 2007	Gelnhausen, Germany	SVC
August 2008	Wuerzburg, Germany (<i>scheduled closing</i>)	GDPR
August 2008	Darmstadt, Germany (<i>scheduled closing</i>)	GDPR
August 2008	Hanau, Germany (<i>scheduled closing</i>)	GDPR
September 2008	Idar Oberstein, Germany (<i>scheduled closing</i>)	GDPR
September 2008	Dexheim, Germany (<i>scheduled closing</i>)	GDPR

Appendix 14

Best Commissary Awards (Presented Prior to 1991)

NOTES:

(1) *These records are incomplete and reflect all the information available at the time this book went to press.*

(2) *Runners-up, as well as individual departments, were also recognized, but since these were often done on a regional basis they are too numerous to be listed here. People needing such information should contact the DeCA historian.*

(3) *Year shown is the year for which the award was given, which was not necessarily the year in which it was presented.*

ARMY TROOP SUPPORT AGENCY'S BILL NICHOLS BEST COMMISSARY AWARDS

First elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1966, **Congressman Bill Nichols** was a member of the House Armed Services Committee from 1968 until his death in 1988. He served as the chairman of its panel on non-appropriated funds, and the panel on Commissaries and Exchanges. He also chaired two subcommittees, those on military personnel and compensation, and investigations. He was a member of two other subcommittees, those on research and development, and on readiness.

The DeCA headquarters building bears Congressman Nichols' name. Prior to the formation of DeCA, the Army Troop Support Agency (TSA) named its Best Commissary awards for him.

- 1977: *(based on commander's evaluation)* Best Store *(worldwide)*: **Fort Sill, Okla.**
- 1978: *(first formal evaluation)* Best Store *(worldwide)*: **Fort Carson, Colo.**
- 1979: Best Store *(worldwide)*: **Fort Sill, Okla.**
- 1980: Best Store *(worldwide)*: **Fort Lewis, Wash.**
- 1981: Best Store *(worldwide)*: **Fort Bliss, Texas.**
- 1982: Best Store *(worldwide)*: **Fort Knox, Ky.**
- 1983: Best Store *(worldwide)*: **Fort Benning, Ga.**
- 1984: Best Store *(worldwide)*: **Fort Riley, Kan.**
- 1985: CONUS: Large Store, **Fort Campbell, Ky.**
Small Store, **Rock Island Arsenal, Ill.**
OCONUS*: Large Store, **Baumholder, Germany.**
Small Store, **Heilbronn, Germany.**
- 1986: CONUS: Large Store, **Fort Devens, Mass., & Fort Campbell, Ky.** Small Store, **Fort Monroe, Va.**
OCONUS: Large Store, **Fuerth, Germany.** Small Store, none selected.
- 1987: CONUS: Large Store, *(tie)* **Fort Huachuca, Ariz., & Redstone Arsenal, Ala.** Small Store, **Fort Monroe, Va.**
OCONUS: Large Store, none selected. Small Store, **Fort Greely, Alaska.**

*— OCONUS at this point meant "outside of the contiguous United States" or outside the lower 48.

- 1988: CONUS: Large Store, *(tie)* **Fort Campbell, Ky.; Fort Knox, Ky.; & Fort Lewis, Wash.** Small Store, **Fort Monroe, Va.**
OCONUS: Large Store, none selected. Small Store, **Berchtesgaden, Germany.**
- 1989: CONUS: Large Store, **Fort Sill, Okla.** Small Store, **Edgewood Arsenal, Md.**
OCONUS: Large Store, **Fuerth, Germany.** Small Store, **Fort Greely, Alaska.****
- 1990: CONUS: Large Store, **Fort Carson, Colo.** Small Store, **Fort Monroe, Va.**
OCONUS: Large Store, **Baumholder, Germany.** Small Store, **Fort Greely, Alaska.****
- 1991: Europe: Large Store, **Fuerth, Germany.** Small Store, **West Heilbronn, Germany.** Small store, **Sierra AD, Calif.**

(In 1991, most regions presented no awards, due to the transition to DeCA.)

** — Stores in Alaska and Hawaii were counted as overseas stores.

AIR FORCE AND AIR FORCE COMMISSARY SERVICE L. MENDEL RIVERS AWARDS

Congressman L. Mendel Rivers was the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee in the 1960s and took an active role in preserving the commissary benefit. Throughout his distinguished career, he was a friend to the military generally and to the enlisted man in particular.

Best Store, Pre-AFCOMS:

Until 1980, all Air Force-wide awards were for the best store or complex Worldwide. However, each major command also gave awards. Information on these is spotty at best. Whatever is presently known is included here.

- 1963 Best Store, Air Force Logistics Command: **Hill AFB, Utah**
- 1964 Best Store, Air Force Logistics Command: **Norton AFB, Calif.**
- 1964 Best Store, 8th Air Force: **Homestead AFB, Fla.**
- 1967 Best Store, Military Airlift Command: **Norton AFB, Calif.**
- 1970 Best USAF Worldwide: **McChord AFB, Wash.** *(from Military Airlift Command)*
- 1971 Best USAF Worldwide: **McChord AFB, Wash.** *(Military Airlift Command)*
- 1972 Best USAF Worldwide: **Vandenberg AFB, Calif.** *(Strategic Air Command)*
- 1973 Best USAF Worldwide: **Vandenberg AFB, Calif.** *(Strategic Air Command)*
- 1974 Best Worldwide: **Barksdale AFB, La.** *(Strategic Air Command)*
- 1975 Best Worldwide: **Barksdale AFB, La.** *(Strategic Air Command)*

Best Store, AFSCOMs:

- 1976 Best Worldwide: **Yokota AB, Japan**
First Runner-up: **Vandenberg AFB, Calif.** Second Runner-up: **George AFB, Calif**
Best in Command: ADC: **Tyndall AFB, Fla.** AFSC: **Eglin AFB, Fla.** ATC: **Laughlin AFB, Texas.** AFLC: **Tinker AFB, Okla.** MAC: **Scott AFB, Ill.** USAFE: **Hahn AB, Germany.** USAFSS: **Goodfellow AFB, Texas.**
- 1977 Best Worldwide: **McChord AFB, Wash.**
Best Complex: **Alabama Complex**
- 1978 Best Worldwide: **Yokota AB, Japan**
Best Complex: **Alabama Complex**
- 1979 Best Worldwide: **Offutt AFB, Neb.**
Best Complex: **Southwest Complex**
- 1980 Best CONUS: **Eglin AFB, Fla.**
Best Overseas: **Yokota AB, Japan**
- 1981 Best CONUS: **Eglin AFB, Fla.**
Best Overseas: **Yokota AB, Japan**
- 1982 Best CONUS: **Moody AFB, Ga.**
Best Overseas: **RAF Lakenheath, UK**
- 1983 Best CONUS: **Eglin AFB, Fla.**
Best Overseas: **Aviano AS, Italy**
- 1984 Best CONUS: **England AFB, La.**
Best Overseas: **Elmendorf AFB, Alaska***
- 1985 Best CONUS: **Peterson AFB, Colo.**
Best Large Store: **Peterson AFB, Colo.**
Best Small Store: **Myrtle Beach, S.C.**
Best Overseas: **Misawa AB, Japan**
Best in Europe: **Ankara AS, Turkey, & Ramstein AB, Germany**
Best in Pacific: **Misawa AB, Japan**
- 1986 Best CONUS: **Tyndall AFB, Fla.**
Best Large Store: **Tyndall AFB, Fla.**
Best Small Store: **Vance AFB, Nev.**
Best Overseas: **Camp New Amsterdam, Netherlands**
Best in Europe: **Camp New Amsterdam, Netherlands, & Aviano AB, Italy**
Best in Pacific: **Misawa AB, Japan**
- 1987 Best CONUS: **Nellis AFB, Nev.**
Large Store: **Nellis AFB, Nev.**
Small Store: **Malmstrom AFB, Mont.**
Best Overseas: **Misawa AB, Japan**
Best in Europe: **RAF Chicksands, UK, & Torrejon, Spain**

Best in Pacific: Misawa AB, Japan

- 1988 Best CONUS: **Eglin AFB, Fla.**
Best Large Store: **Eglin AFB, Fla.**
Best Small Store: **Moody AFB, Ga.**
Best Overseas: **Sembach AB, Germany**
Best in Europe: **Sembach AB, Germany**
Best in Pacific: **Camp Foster, Japan**
- 1989 Best CONUS: **MacDill AFB, Fla.**
Best Large Store: **MacDill AFB, Fla.**
Best Small Store: **Eaker AFB, Ark.**
Best Overseas: **Sembach AB, Germany**
Best in Europe: **Sembach AB, Germany**
Best in Pacific: **Camp Foster, Okinawa (Japan)**
- 1990 Best CONUS: **Eglin AFB, Fla.**
Best Large Store: **Eglin AFB, Fla.**
Best Small Store: **Malmstrom AFB, Mont.**
Best Overseas: **Misawa AB, Japan**
Best in Europe: **Soesterberg AB, Netherlands**
Best in Pacific: **Misawa AB, Japan**

(No awards given for 1991 due to transition to DeCA)

** — Stores in Alaska and Hawaii were counted as overseas stores.*

**NAVY COMMISSARY AWARDS:
RICHARD M. PAGET AWARD
FOR COMMISSARY EXCELLENCE**

Richard M. Paget, a retired Navy captain, had been a member of the first Navy Resale Advisory Committee in 1946, which served as a board of directors for the Navy Ships Store Office (NSSO). Influential in NSSO's formation, Paget remained on the board for over forty years, and had a lasting positive influence on Navy morale and welfare.

At press time, much of the information for the following list was lacking. Anyone with documentation to support a store's claim to the award should contact the DeCA historian.

- 1982-83: Best Small Store: Information not available
Best Large Store: **NAS Oceana, Va.**
- 1983-84: Best Small Store: **Meridian NRS, Miss.**
Best Large Store: **NB Pearl Harbor, Hawaii**
- 1984-85: Best Small Store: Information not available
Best Large Store: **NAS Oceana, Va.**
- 1985-86: Best Small Store: **Yorktown, Va.**
Best Large Store: **NAS Oceana, Va.**
- 1986-87: Best Small Store: Information not available
Best Large Store: Information not available

- 1987-88: Best Small Store: NAS Keflavik, Iceland
Best Large Store: Imperial Beach, Calif.
- 1988-89: Best Large Store: NSB Bangor, Wash.
Best Small Store: information not available
- 1989-90: Best Large Store: NSB King's Bay, Ga.
Best Small Store: NB Norfolk, Va.
- 1990-91: Best Large Store: NSB Bangor, Wash.
Best Small Store: NASG Edzell, UK

MARINE COMMISSARIES: DAN DANIEL AWARDS

Congressman Dan Daniel had a career closely paralleling that of Congressman Nichols. Daniel was a member of the House Armed Services Committee from his election in 1968 until his death in 1988. He served as the chairman of the HASC Subcommittee on Readiness, and chaired the subcommittee's panel on morale, welfare, and recreation. He was a steadfast backer of the commissary benefit.

- 1988: Best Store: MCAS Cherry Point, N.C.
- 1989: Information not available
- 1990: Best Store: MCB Twentynine Palms, Calif.
Runner-Up: MCAS New River, N.C.

Best Commissary and Major Personnel Awards *(Presented by DeCA, 1991-2008)*

Note: Some of this information is incomplete because stores or regions did not always report award results, particularly in DeCA's early days. If you can help to correct these omissions, please write the DeCA historian at following address:

1300 E Ave, Fort Lee, VA 23801-1800.

DeCA's ANNUAL AWARDS for Best Commissaries were first presented at the annual American Logistics Association convention, 1992.

Four of the awards are named for men who have been closely linked with the commissary benefit over the years, whose names have already been used for various Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps commissary system awards. A fifth award was added for the largest superstores for the 2004 competition, presented in 2005. As of 2007, the awards were as follows:

Best Superstore, CONUS: Director's Award (*initiated in 2004-2005*). These stores were defined by their sales totals: over \$40,000,000 in a single year.

Best Large Store, CONUS: Bill Nichols Award. First elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1966, Congressman William Flynt Nichols (D-Alabama) was a member of the House Armed Services Committee from 1968 until his death at age seventy on December 13, 1988. He served as the chairman of its panel on non-appropriated funds, and the panel on commissaries and exchanges. He also chaired two subcommittees, those on military personnel and compensation, and investigations. He was a member of two other subcommittees: those on research and development, and on readiness.

The DeCA headquarters building bears Nichols' name. Prior to the formation of DeCA, the Army Troop Support Agency (TSA) named its Best Commissary awards for him.

Best Small Store, CONUS: Richard M. Paget Award. Paget, a retired Navy captain, was a member of the first Navy Resale Advisory Committee in 1946, which served as a board of directors for the Navy Ships Store Office (NSSO). Influential in NSSO's formation, Paget remained on the board for over forty years, and had a lasting positive influence on Navy morale and welfare.

Before DeCA was formed, the Navy's annual best commissary awards were named in his honor: the Paget Award for Commissary Excellence.

Best Large Store, OCONUS: Dan Daniel Award. In a career closely paralleling that of Congressman Nichols, Congressman Dan Daniel (D-Virginia) was a member of the House Armed Services Committee from his election in 1968 until his death at age seventy-three on January 23, 1988. He served as the chairman of the HASC Subcommittee on Readiness, and also chaired the subcommittee's panel on morale, welfare, and recreation.

Before DeCA was formed, the Marine Corps named its Best Commissary awards for him, and the Air Force Commissary Service (AFCOMS) named its annual Enlisted Awards in his honor.

Best Small Store, OCONUS: L. Mendel Rivers Award.

Congressman L. Mendel Rivers was the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee in the 1960s and took an active role in preserving the commissary benefit. Prior to the formation of DeCA, the Air Force Commissary Service named its Best Commissary awards in his honor.

Trophies:

The trophies are large silver bowls engraved with names of the winners. These are rotating trophies that the winning commissaries display for one year. The winners also receive a smaller bowl, which they retain on a permanent basis. Each region nominee receives either a small bowl, plaque, or both, as the best in its individual region.

U.S. and Overseas:

In addition, regions present awards to their CONUS and OCONUS stores, large and small, judged to have the best individual departments. While the department award categories have changed over time, they have usually included the best grocery, meat, produce, and customer service departments in the region, as well as the best merchandising program. Region directors have the discretion to establish either a "Most Improved Commissary" Award, an "Honorable Mention" Award, or a similar award designed and named to indicate the particular spirit or message that the award is meant to convey. These awards vary by the region, and are usually either plaques or framed certificates.

Special, one-time awards:

These are occasionally presented by the headquarters or the regions to recognize special accomplishments or services performed by specific stores in a particular year.

Store size criteria:

The difference between large and small stores has changed over the years, but has always been defined by location and sales figures. As of December 31, 2007, these criteria were as follows:

For United States commissaries, the break point between large and small is \$12 million in annual sales. For overseas commissaries, the break point between large and small is \$5.5 million in annual sales.

Region nominees for DeCA's Best Commissary Awards must have been selected in the region competition as a winner of at least one departmental award.

Best Store Award Winners and Nominees

DIRECTOR'S AWARD, BEST SUPERSTORE, CONUS (first presented in 2005):

2004 winner, presented in 2005: NAS Jacksonville, Fla., DeCA East.

Other Nominee: March ARB, Calif., DeCA West

2005-2006 winner: Fort Lewis, Wash., DeCA West. Other nominee: NAS Jacksonville, Fla., DeCA East

2006-2007 winner: Fort Lewis, Wash., DeCA West. Other nominee: Scott Air Force Base, Ill., DeCA East

2007-2008 winner: Patrick AFB, Fla., DeCA East. Other nominee: NAS Pensacola, Fla., DeCA East.

BILL NICHOLS AWARD, BEST LARGE COMMISSARY, CONUS:

1992 winner: Eglin AFB, Fla., Southern Region. Other nominees: NAB Little Creek, Va., Central Region; Bergstrom AFB, Texas, Midwest; Fort Belvoir, Va., Northeast; Fairchild AFB, Wash., Northwest/Pacific; Nellis AFB, Nev., Southwest.

1993 winner: Ellsworth AFB, S.D., Midwest Region. Other nominees: Fort Eustis, Va., Central Region; Fort Devens, Mass., Northeast; Fairchild AFB, Wash., Northwest/Pacific; Eglin AFB, Fla., Southern; Hill AFB, Utah, Southwest.

1994 winner: Fort Riley, Kan., Midwest Region. Other nominees: Langley AFB, Va., Central Region; Fort Devens, Mass., Northeast; Fort Lewis, Wash., Northwest/Pacific; Fort Gillem, Ga., Southern; Edwards AFB, Calif., Southwest.

1995 winner: Hill AFB, Utah, Southwest Region. Other nominees: Langley AFB, Va., Central Region; Fort Riley, Kan., Midwest; Aberdeen PG, Md., Northeast; Fairchild AFB, Wash., Northwest; Eglin AFB, Fla., Southern.

1996 winner: Fort Myer, Va., Northeast Region. Other nominees: Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, Central Region; Fort Bliss, Texas, Midwest; McChord AFB, Wash., Northwest; Eglin AFB, Fla., Southern; Hill AFB, Utah, Southwest.

1997 winner: Eglin AFB, Fla., Southern Region. Other nominees: NS Norfolk, Va., Central Region; McConnell AFB, Kan., Midwest; Bolling AFB, D.C., Northeast; NSB Bangor, Wash., Northwest; Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz., Southwest.

Note: Starting with the 1998 awards, due to the consolidation of three former regions into the Eastern Region and two former regions into the Western/Pacific Region, nominees were apportioned as follows: Eastern—three large, three small, one OCONUS large or small; Western/Pacific—two large, two small, one large and one small OCONUS; Midwest—one large, one small; Europe—one large, one small OCONUS.

1998 winner: Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz., Western/Pacific Region. Other nominees: Fort Belvoir, Va.; NB Norfolk, Va.; and Camp Lejeune, N.C., Eastern Region; McConnell AFB, Kan., Midwest; Camp Pendleton, Calif., Western/Pacific.

1999-2000 winner: McChord AFB, Wash., Western/Pacific Region. Other nominees: Bolling AFB, D.C.; Patrick AFB, Fla.; and Barksdale AFB, La.; Eastern Region; McConnell AFB, Kan., Midwest; Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz., Western/Pacific.

2000-2001 winner: Eglin AFB, Fla., Eastern Region. Other nominees: Fort Belvoir, Va., & NB Norfolk, Va., Eastern Region; Offutt AFB, Neb., Midwest; March ARB, Calif. & MCAS Miramar, Calif., Western/Pacific.

2001-2002 winner: MCAS Miramar, Calif., Western/Pacific Region. Other nominees: Fort Drum, N.Y., Eastern Region; Fort Sam Houston, Texas, Midwest.

2002-2003 winner: Tyndall AFB, Fla., Eastern Region. Other nominees: Little Rock AFB, Ark., Midwest Region; Smokey Point Support Center, NS Everett, Wash., Western/Pacific.

2003-2004 winner: Smokey Point Support Center, NS Everett, Wash., DeCA West. Other nominees: Aberdeen PG, Md., Eastern Region; Air Force Academy, Colo., Midwest.

2004-2005 winner: NB Kitsap, Bangor commissary, DeCA West. Other nominee: Tyndall AFB, Fla., Eastern Region.

2005-2006 winner: Peterson AFB, Colo., DeCA West. Other nominee: Fort Eustis, Va., DeCA East

2006-2007 winner: MCAS New River, N.C., DeCA East. Other nominee: Fort Huachuca, Ariz.

2007-2008 winner: MCAS New River, N.C., DeCA East. Other nominee: MCB Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, DeCA West.

RICHARD M. PAGET AWARD: BEST SMALL COMMISSARY, CONUS

1992 winner: Fort Monroe, Va., Central Region. Other nominees: Grand Forks AFB, N.D., Midwest Region; New Cumberland AD, Pa., Northeast; Fort Greely, Alaska, Northwest/Pacific; NSB Kings Bay, Ga., Southern; Sierra AD, Calif., Southwest.

1993 winner: Vance AFB, Okla., Midwest Region. Other nominees: MCAS New River, N.C., Central Region; Loring AFB, Maine, Northeast; Fort Greely, Alaska, Northwest/Pacific; NS Mayport, Fla., Southern; North Island, Calif., Southwest.

1994 winner: NAS Cecil Field, Fla., Southern Region. Other nominees: C.M. Price Support Center, Ill., Central Region; Minot AFB, N.D., Midwest; Fort Detrick, Md., Northeast; Fort Richardson, Alaska, Northwest/Pacific; Southwest, no nominee.

1995 co-winners: Grand Forks AFB, N.D., Midwest Region, and Malmstrom AFB, Mont., Northwest/Pacific Region. Other nominees: Whiteman AFB, Mo., Central Region, NAU Scotia, N.Y., Northeast; NS Mayport, Fla., Southern; NTC San Diego, Calif., Southwest.

1996 winner: Whiting Field, Fla., Southern Region. Other nominees: Whiteman AFB, Mo., Central Region; Cannon AFB, N.M., Midwest; ARDEC (Picatinny Arsenal), Pa., Northeast; Malmstrom AFB, Mont., Northwest/Pacific; NAS Fallon, Nev., Southwest.

1997 winner: MCLB Barstow, Calif., Southwest Region. Other nominees: MCAS New River, N.C., Central Region; F. E. Warren AFB, Wyo.,

Midwest; NSWC Dahlgren, Va., Northeast; Malmstrom AFB, Mont., Northwest; Whiting Field, Fla., Southern.

Note: Starting with the 1998 awards, due to the consolidation of three former regions into the Eastern Region and two former regions into the Western/Pacific Region, nominees were apportioned as follows: Eastern—three large, three small, one OCONUS large or small; Western Pacific—two large, two small, one large and one small OCONUS; Midwest—one large, one small; Europe—one large, one small CONUS.

1998 winner: Altus AFB, Okla., Midwest Region. Other nominees: Gulfport, Miss.; Kings Bay, Ga.; and Portsmouth, N.H., Eastern Region; MCLB Barstow, Calif., and MCAS El Centro, Calif., Western/Pacific.

1999-2000 winner: ARDEC [Picatinny Arsenal], N.J., Eastern Region. Other nominees: MCAS New River, N.C.; and Rock Island Arsenal, Ill., Eastern Region; Dyess AFB, Texas, Midwest; MCLB Barstow, Calif., and NAS Barber's Point, Hawaii, Western/Pacific.

2000-2001 winner: Beale AFB, Calif., Western/Pacific Region. Other nominees: Hunter AAF, Ga.; NAS Whiting Field, Fla.; and NSWC Dahlgren, Va., Eastern Region; Minot AFB, N.D., Midwest; NWS China Lake, Calif., Western/Pacific.

2001-2002 winner: Minot AFB, ND, Midwest Region. Other nominees: Hunter AAF, Ga., Eastern Region; Malmstrom AFB, Mont., Western/Pacific.

2002-2003 winner: Malmstrom AFB, Mont., Western/Pacific Region. Other nominees: Carlisle Barracks, Pa., Eastern Region; Minot AFB, N.D., Midwest.

2003-2004 winner: NAWS China Lake, Calif., Western/Pacific Region. Other nominees: Carlisle Barracks, Pa., Eastern Region; Ellsworth AFB, S.D., Midwest.

2004-2005 winner: NAS Whiting Field, Florida, DeCA East. Other nominee: Fort Greely, Alaska, DeCA West.

2005-2006 winner: Armament, Research, Development and Engineering Center (ARDEC), Picatinny Arsenal, N.J., DeCA East. Other nominee: NAS Barbers Point, Hawaii, DeCA West.

2006-2007 winner: Rock Island Arsenal, Ill., DeCA East. Other nominee: NAS Barbers Point, Hawaii, DeCA West.

2007-2008 winner: NAS Key West, Fla., DeCA East. Other nominee: NCBC Gulfport, Miss., DeCA East.

DAN DANIEL AWARD: BEST LARGE COMMISSARY, OCONUS

1992 winner: Fuerth, Germany, European Region. Other nominee: Camp Foster, Okinawa, Northwest/Pacific Region.

1993 winner: Misawa AB, Japan, Northwest/Pacific. Other nominee: Fuerth, Germany, European Region.

1994 winner: Vogelweh AB, Germany, European. No other nominees.

1995 winner: Corozal, Panama, Southern Region. Other nominees: RAF Lakenheath, UK, European; Yongsan, S. Korea, Northwest/Pacific.

1996 winner: RAF Lakenheath, UK, European Region. Other nominees: Corozal, Panama, Southern Region; Misawa AB, Japan, Northwest/Pacific.

1997 winner: Ramstein AB, Germany, European Region. Other nominee: Yongsan, S. Korea, Northwest/Pacific.

1998 winner: Misawa AB, Japan, Western/Pacific Region. Other nominee: Bitburg, Germany, European.

1999-2000 winner: Yongsan, Korea, Western/Pacific Region. Other nominee: Vogelweh, Germany, European.

2000-2001 winner: Osan AB, S. Korea, Western/Pacific Region. Other nominee: Vicenza, Italy, European.

2001-2002 winner: Misawa AB, Japan, Western/Pacific Region. Other nominees: Vilseck, Germany, European.

2002-2003 winner: Yokota AB, Japan, Western/Pacific Region. Other nominee: Aviano AB, Italy, European.

2003-2004 winner: Aviano AB, Italy, European Region. Other nominees: Keflavik, Iceland, Eastern; Misawa AB, Japan, Western/Pacific.

2004-2005 winner: Misawa AB, Japan, DeCA West. Other nominee: Hanau, Germany, DeCA Europe.

2005-2006 winner: Misawa AB, Japan, DeCA West. Other nominee: Lajes Field, Azores, DeCA Europe.

2006-2007 winner: Camp Humphreys, S. Korea, DeCA West. Other nominee: Schweinfurt, Germany, DeCA Europe.

2007-2008 winner: U.S. Army Garrison Baumholder, Germany, DeCA Europe. Other nominee: Kadena AB, Okinawa, DeCA West.

L. MENDEL RIVERS AWARD: BEST SMALL COMMISSARY, OCONUS

1992 winner: Soesterberg AFB, Netherlands, European Region. Other nominee: Taegu, S. Korea, Northwest/Pacific.

1993 winner: Spangdahlem AB, Germany, European Region. Other

nominee: Sagamihara, Japan, Northwest/Pacific.

1994 winner: Livorno, Italy (Camp Darby), European Region.
Other nominee: Camp Courtney, Japan, Northwest/Pacific; Southern.

1995 winner: MCB Camp Courtney, Okinawa, Northwest/Pacific Region. Other nominee: Bamberg, Germany, European Region.

1996 winner: Bamberg, Germany, European Region. Other nominees: NAF Atsugi, Japan, Northwest/Pacific; Howard AFB, Panama, Southern.

1997 winner: RAF Croughton, UK, European Region. Other nominees: Howard AFB, Panama, Southern; Camp Kinser, Okinawa (Japan), Northwest/Pacific.

1998 winner: Livorno, Italy [Camp Darby], European Region. Other nominees: Howard AFB, Panama, Eastern; Taegu, S. Korea, Western/Pacific.

1999-2000 winner: Taegu, S. Korea, Western/Pacific Region. Other nominees: NAS Keflavik, Iceland, Eastern; Cairo, Egypt, European.

2000-2001 winner: Livorno (Camp Darby), Italy, European Region. Other nominees: NAS Keflavik, Iceland, Eastern; Camp Kinser, Okinawa, Western/Pacific.

2001-2002 winner: Cairo, Egypt, European Region. Other nominee: Camp Kinser, Okinawa, Western/Pacific.

2002-2003 winner: (tie) NAS Keflavik, Iceland, Eastern Region, and Livorno (Camp Darby), Italy, DeCA Europe. No other nominees.

2003-2004 winner: Cairo, Egypt, DeCA Europe. Other nominee: Camp Page, S. Korea, Western/Pacific.

2004-2005 winner: NB Sasebo, Japan, DeCA West. Other nominee: Livorno (Camp Darby), Italy, DeCA Europe.

2005-2006 winner: Garmisch, Germany, DeCA Europe. Other nominee: Pusan, S. Korea, DeCA West.

2006-2007 winner: Izmir AS Turkey, DeCA Europe. Other nominee: Camp Kure, Japan, DeCA West.

2007-2008 winner: Hario Village, Fleet Activities Sasebo, Japan, DeCA West. Other nominee: Izmir AS, Turkey, DeCA Europe.

ANNUAL MERCHANDISING CONTEST AWARDS

1995: MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif.

1996: Large Store: Redstone Arsenal, Ala.
Small Store: Osan AB S. Korea

1997: Large Store, US: Eglin AFB, Fla. Runner-up: Redstone Arsenal, Ala. (special award)
Small Store, US: NSB Bangor, Wash.
Large Store, Overseas: Yokosuka, Japan
Small Store, Overseas: no nominees

1998 (awarded in 1999):

Large Store, US: Redstone Arsenal, Ala.
Small Store, US: Mallonee Village, N.C.
Large Store, Overseas: Hanau, Germany
Small Store, Overseas: RAF Croughton, United Kingdom
Region Award for Most Stores Participating: Midwest.

1999 (awarded in 2000):

Large Store, US: Redstone Arsenal, Ala.
Small Store, US: NAS Corpus Christi, Texas
Large Store, Overseas: Vogelweh AB, Germany
Small Store, Overseas: Camp Foster, Okinawa
Region Award for Most Stores Participating: Midwest.

2000 (awarded in 2001):

Large Store, US: McChord AFB, Wash.
Small Store, US: Malmstrom AFB, Mont.
Large Store, Overseas: Heidelberg, Germany
Small Store, Overseas: Livorno (Camp Darby), Italy.

2001 (awarded in 2002):

Large Store, US: McChord AFB, Wash.
Small Store, US: NAS Patuxent River, Md.
Large Store, Overseas: Hanau, Germany
Small Store, Overseas: Bad Nauheim, Germany

2002 (awarded in 2003):

Superstore, US: MCAS Miramar, Calif.
Large Store, US: Fort Drum, N.Y.
Small Store, US: Fort Wainwright, Alaska
Superstore Overseas: Yongsan, S. Korea
Large Store, Overseas: Yokota AB, Japan
Small Store, Overseas: Hohenfels, Germany

2003 (awarded in 2004):

Superstore, US: Fort Benning, Ga.
Large Store, US: Fort Drum, N.Y.
Small Store, US: Fort Wainwright, Alaska
Superstore Overseas: Yongsan, S. Korea
Large Store, Overseas: Osan AB, S. Korea
Small Store, Overseas: Cairo, Egypt

2004 (awarded in 2005):

Superstore, US: McChord AFB, Wash.
Large Store, US: Barksdale AFB, La.
Small Store, US: MCAS New River, N.C.
Superstore Overseas: Yongsan, S. Korea

Merchandising Contest Awards *(continued)***Large Store, Overseas:** Osan AB, S. Korea**Small Store, Overseas:** Cairo, Egypt**2005 (awarded in 2006):****Superstore, US:** McChord AFB, Wash.**Large Store, US:** Fort Eustis, Va.**Small Store, US:** MCAS New River, N.C.**Superstore, Overseas:** Aviano Air Base, Italy**Large Store, Overseas:** MCB Camp Kinser, Okinawa (Japan)**Small Store, Overseas:** Izmir, Turkey**2006 (awarded in 2007):****Superstore, US:** McChord AFB, Wash.**Large Store, US:** Fort Eustis, Va.**Small Store, US:** Ellsworth AFB, S.D.**Superstore, Overseas:** Yongsan, S. Korea**Large Store, Overseas:** Taegu (Camp Walker), S. Korea**Small Store, Overseas:** Cairo, Egypt**Best Overall Region:** DeCA West**Best Overall Zone:** Zone 12, with hub store at McChord AFB, Wash.**2007 (awarded in 2008):****Superstore, US:** Lackland Air Force, Texas**Large Store, US:** Fort Eustis, Va.**Small Store, US:** Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Md.**Superstore, Overseas:** RAF Lakenheath, England, UK**Large Store, Overseas:** Bitburg, Germany**Small Store, Overseas:** Cairo, Egypt**Best Overall Region:** DeCA Europe**Best Overall Zone:** Zone 37, Mediterranean Zone, with hub store at Livorno (Camp Darby), Italy**EEO AWARDS**

Presented annually by the DeCA equal employment opportunity office at DeCA headquarters. The awards recognize special accomplishment in meeting the agency's EEO goals, which seek a work environment where all employees can reach their greatest potential in the work place regardless of race, gender, religion, or other personal factors.

1995: **Carroll Allred**, DeCA headquarters — EEO Employee of the Year**1996:** **Marian Edlow**, Northeast Region, public affairs representative, EEO Employee of the Year**Robin E. Schmidt**, zone mgr, Zone 22 — EEO Leader of Year
Michael W. Gomoluh, accounting technician, Nellis AFB commissary — DoD Outstanding Employee with Disabilities**1997:** **Ron Kelly**, DeCA headquarters public affairs — EEO Employee of the Year (*no other information currently available*)**1998:** **Pete Skirbunt**, historian, DeCA headquarters public affairs — EEO Employee of the Year**Kitty Jolley**, commissary management specialist, category manager, headquarters MBU — Woman Employee of the Year**Joseph A. Migliacci**, deputy commissary officer, RAF Croughton, UK — Outstanding Employee with a Disability**Doris M. Hobson**, deputy commissary officer, Bolling AFB — EEO Leadership of the Year**Bolling AFB commissary** — EEO Organization of the Year**Paul Rhodes**, commissary officer, and**Doris M. Hobson**, deputy commissary officer**1999:** **Sulma Rodriguez**, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, commissary — EEO Employee of the Year**Janet Hill**, Hanscom AFB, Maine — Outstanding Employee with Disabilities**Yvette Riley Davis**, Southern Area Office — Female Employee of the Year**James Austin**, DeCA headquarters — EEO Leadership Supervisor of the Year**Team Hawaii**, Zone 13, Western/Pacific Region — EEO Organization of the Year; **Dick Cook**, zone manager**Jimmy Ribardo**, inventory management specialist, United Kingdom CDC — DoD Outstanding Employee with Disabilities (one of fourteen DoD awardees)**2000:** **Joseph R. Sandoval**, store director, Bad Kreuznach, Germany, commissary — EEO Employee of the Year**Arturo G. Vargas**, store director, Bad Aibling, Germany, commissary — EEO Leadership of the Year**Barbara J. Parker**, computer specialist, DeCA headquarters IT — Female Employee of the Year;**Russell Fowler**, produce worker, Fort Rucker, Ala., commissary — Outstanding DeCA Employee with Disabilities**European Region** — Organization of the Year; **Bob Tate**, region director**2001:** **Nejat Akin**, store director, Izmir, Turkey, commissary — EEO Employee of the Year**Deborah A. Mundt**, produce department manager, Fort Rucker, Ala., commissary — Disabled Employee of the Year**Sherry Blake**, EEO specialist, Midwest Region — Female Employee of the Year**Crosby H. Johnson**, executive director for capital investment, DeCA headquarters — EEO Leader of the Year**Midwest Region** — EEO Organization of the Year**2002:** **Zenaida Carnahan**, store director, Bad Aibling, Germany, commissary — EEO Employee of the Year**Alice Dickerson**, position classification specialist, DeCA HQ human resources, Disabled Employee of the Year**Deborah A. Mundt**, produce manager, Fort Rucker store, special recognition for receiving a DoD disabilities award**Robert Krisjansson**, grocery manager, Keflavik (Iceland)

commissary, — EEO Leader of the Year

Eastern Region — EEO Organization of the Year, presented to acting director Gary Duell

- 2003:** **Isaac Simmons**, store manager, Ramstein AB, Germany, commissary — EEO Employee of the Year
Bradley Flagler, traffic manager, Germersheim (Germany) CDC — Disabled Employee of the Year
Lerma Anderson, customer service manager, Fort McPherson, Ga., commissary — EEO Leader of the Year
Midwest Region HQ — EEO Organization of the Year

- 2004:** None awarded; schedule shift resulted in the awards being presented at a different time of year, starting in 2005.

- 2005:** **Maria Rodriguez**, EEO assistant, DeCA East — EEO Employee of the Year
Supong Davis, front-end manager, Tyndall AFB, Fla., commissary — EEO Leader of the Year
Ulysses Banks, store worker, Walter Reed AMC (D.C.) commissary — Disabled Employee of the Year
DeCA East — EEO Organization of the Year

- 2006:** **Cynthia Nitura**, teller, Tyndall AFB, Fla., commissary — EEO Employee of the Year
Bonnie Kanitz, director, DeCA East — EEO Leader of the Year;
Derek Lee, management support clerk, Hickam AFB, Hawaii, Commissary — Disabled Employee of the Year
NSCS Athens — EEO Organization of the Year; Linda Soto, store director

- 2007:** **Patty Mushtare**, store administrator with the Fort Drum, N.Y., commissary — EEO Employee of the Year
Barbara Jane Sannino, store director, Fort Meade, Md. — EEO Leader of the Year
Anthony Green, store worker, McGuire AFB, N.J. — Disabled Employee of the Year
Resource Management Division, DeCA Europe — EEO Organization of the Year

- 2008:** **Armanda Varnado**, store associate, Cannon AFB, N.M. — EEO Employee of the Year
Michael Cox, store director, Sheppard AFB, Texas — EEO Leader of the Year
Frank W. Jenkins, Jr., store associate, Fort Monmouth, N.J. — EEO Disabled Employee of the Year
Mediterranean Zone — EEO Organization of the Year; Salah Ud-Din, Zone manager

DeCA Personnel Awards

MICHAEL W. BLACKWELL LEADERSHIP AWARD

Named for Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Michael W. Blackwell.

Blackwell had worked for AFCOMS before the consolidation into DeCA. He was the winner of the first DeCA Senior Enlisted award (E7-E9) in 1991, when he was assigned to DeCA's Central Region headquarters.

An extremely popular NCO, he became the agency's senior enlisted advisor in 1994. Battling cancer, he retired from DeCA on February 9, 1995, and passed away on April 5, 1995. He was only forty-four at the time of his death.

His final advice to his DeCA colleagues at his retirement ceremony was, "Take time—make time—for your family." In addition to this leadership award, the special conference room at DeCA headquarters has been named in his honor.



1995-96: **Alexa G. Fezler**, commissary officer, Fitzsimons Army Medical Center, Aurora, Colo.

1996-97: **CMSgt Bennie Harper**, USAF, Midwest Region enlisted advisor

1997-98: **Charles R. Dowlen, Jr.**, commissary officer, Hanau, Germany

1998-99: **Benjamin Wainwright**, zone manager, S. Korea

1999-2000: **Salah-Ud-Din**, zone manager, Livorno, Italy

2000-01: **Jo Ellen "Josie" McKinney**, Scott AFB, Ill., commissary product coordinator

2001-02: **Robert Smith**, store director, Fort Drum, N.Y.

2002-03: **Terry Batenhorst**, store director, Andrews AFB, Md.

2003-04: **Harry Nichols**, store director, Ramstein AB, Germany

2004-05: **Max Kraftchick**, zone manager, Zone 4, DeCA East, Fla.

2005-06: **Herbert Winchester**, zone manager, Zone 1, Gulf Coast, DeCA East

2006-07: **Sharon Parton**, store director, Fort Campbell, Ky.

2007-2008: **Judy Mendez**, store director, Fort Huachuca, Ariz.

THE JOEL McCARTY COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE AWARD DECA - EUROPE

This award is bestowed by the ALA European Chapter in honor and in memory of **Joel McCarty**. After a distinguished career with AFCOMS and the Defense Commissary Agency, Joel passed away at the age of fifty-seven on January 2, 2000. McCarty's last assignment was with the European Region as chief, operations division.

McCarty exemplified a commitment to excellence in the commissary business, and demonstrated the value of a close working relationship and cooperative spirit with industry representatives and manufacturers. The award named in his honor is presented to a DeCA employee who is or has been with the European Region, who has shown the highest of standards—a "Commitment to Excellence"—which Joel McCarty exemplified. The trophy is permanently displayed at the DeCA Europe headquarters. Each recipient receives a duplicate miniature trophy.

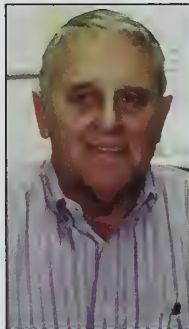


McCarty Award recipients

- 2000: Robert Tate, director
 2001: Shirley Marshall, distribution facilities specialist
 2002: Gerlinde Smith, semi-perishable buyer, operations division
 2002: Nora Goovers, perishable buyer, operations division
 2003: Harry Nichols, store director, Ramstein AB, Germany
 2004: Arthur Eschenbach, chief, Germersheim Central Distribution Center, Germany
 John Campbell, chief, assistance branch, operations division
 2005: Michael Tallon, chief of security, operations division (*awarded posthumously in February 2006*)
 2006: None awarded
 2007: Michael Dowling, region director
 Melvin Fox, region deputy director
 2008: Ron Foster, store director, Aviano AB, Italy.

William J. LaBay — Leadership through Mentoring Award
Given by Western Region (DeCA West)
To Honor Mentors, Past and Present

William J. "Bill" LaBay, a thirty-seven-year veteran in the grocery industry, is remembered by co-workers, subordinates, and industry friends as a man who would always find a minute to mentor an intern, store director, secretary, or anyone willing to work hard and learn. He served the commissary system around the world as a store director, zone manager, director of operations and chief of the capital investment business area. The bulk of LaBay's career was spent in the Northwestern United States and in the Far East. He retired in January 2002 and passed away the following April.



In remembrance, the William J. LaBay—Leadership through Mentoring Award was created to recognize Western/Pacific Region (now DeCA West) managers or supervisors, who have assisted people on the job and in their personal lives through mentoring, guidance and assistance.

The first five winners of this award were:

- 2002: Tom Kinsey, zone manager, Zone 12
 2003: Karen Oshsner, Yokota AB, Japan, store director
 2004: Diane Pedrick, chief of DeCA West human resources
 2005: Michelle Frost, chief of DeCA West operations
 2006 (presented in 2007): Rick Page, director, DeCA West
 2007: No winners were announced at the time the book went to press.

WORLD CLASS CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARDS

- 1996: Phyllis Hardy, quality assurance evaluator, Bolling AFB, D.C.
 Emma Manuilit, cashier, NAF Atsugi, Japan
 Ok-Chu Niswonger, cashier, Edwards AFB, Calif.

- 1997: Estella Bennett, cashier, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio
 Jim Clark, commissary officer, Fort Meade, Md.
 Vernell Jones, support clerk, NS Mayport, Fla.
 Claudia Tellone, cashier, Patrick AFB, Fla.
 Terry Zook, customer service manager, NSB Bangor, Maine
- 1998: Patricia Carns, sales store checker, Vandenberg AFB, Calif.
 Ruth Champagne, sales store checker, and Richard Morris, assistant store manager, Fort Belvoir, Va. (group award)
 Andrew Davis, sales store checker, March ARB, Calif.
 Cecelia Farwell, supervisory sales store checker, Fort Monmouth, N.J.
 Ella G. Gholston, sales store checker, Patch Barracks, Germany;
 Leonard Langford, commissary officer, Hanscom AFB, Mass.;
 Edmond L. Latey II, commissary store manager, Offutt AFB, Neb.;
 Debbie Machel and Bernadette M'Bangu-Lukaya, Chievres, Belgium (group award)
 Francine Miller, sales store checker, Dyess AFB, Texas
 Thomas C. Owens, management analyst, DeCA headquarters
 Hope Pierce, sales store checker, Fort Myer, Va.
 Chris Tann, store worker, Moody AFB, Ga.

1999 (awarded in 2000):

- Quatonya (Tonya) Anderson, sales store checker, Dyess AFB, Texas;
 Aretha Clay, store worker leader; Ron Frank, grocery manager;
 Debbra Luczejko, store worker; Jozette Stewart, store worker, all from Langley AFB, Va.
 Rudy Jimenez, deputy commissary officer/store administrator, and Laura "Faye" Wicks, customer service manager, Harrison Village, Ind.
 Janet Lawrence, deputy CSO/store administrator, Offutt AFB, Neb.
 Nancy Matheny, computer operator, El Centro, Calif.
 Merly Mugol, store manager (perishable), Imperial Beach, Calif.
 Cynthia Simons, grocery manager, Incirlik AB, Turkey
 Colleen Wilhite, cash cage teller, NSB Bangor, Wash.

2000: awards discontinued

DECA ENLISTED AWARDS, 1991-1995:**Outstanding Enlisted for FY '91**

Junior Enlisted (E1-E4): Airman 1st Class Filipina G. Dianala, USAF, Midwest Region.

Intermediate Enlisted (E4-E6): Petty Officer Pat E. Lee, USN, Northwest/Pacific Region.

Senior Enlisted (E7-E9): Senior Master Sgt Michael W. Blackwell, USAF, Central Region headquarters.

Outstanding Enlisted for FY '92

Junior Enlisted (E1-E3): Airman 1st Class Clinton E. Abell, USAF, Midwest Region: Dyess AFB, Texas.

Intermediate Enlisted (E4-E6): Staff Sgt. Charles E. Minter, USAF, Midwest Region: Tinker AFB, Okla.

Senior Enlisted (E7-E9): Chief Petty Officer Ramon M. Galang, USN, Southwest Region: Miramar NAS, Calif.

Outstanding Enlisted for FY '93

Junior Enlisted (E1-E3): Senior Airman Richard D. Stiles, USAF, Keesler AFB, Miss., Southern Region.

Intermediate Enlisted (E4-E6): Staff Sgt. Deborah Jefferson, USA, Fort Jackson, S.C., Southern Region.

Senior Enlisted (E7-E9): Chief Petty Officer Gary Landess, USN, NAS Mayport, Fla., Southern Region.

Outstanding Enlisted for FY '94:

Junior Enlisted (E1-E3): Airman 1st Class Sandra Rodriguez, USAF, Dyess AFB, Texas, Midwest Region.

Intermediate Enlisted (E4-E6): Tech Sgt. Alexander Kilen, USAF, Offutt AFB, Neb., Midwest Region.

Senior Enlisted (E7-E9): Senior Master Sgt Martin J. Jackson, USAF, Kelly AFB, Texas, Midwest Region headquarters.

Outstanding Enlisted for FY '95:

Junior Enlisted (E1-E3): Senior Airman Curtis L. Kincaid, USAF, McConnell AFB, Midwest Region

Intermediate Enlisted (E4-E6): Tech Sgt. Myron L. Alexander, USAF, Southern Region headquarters.

Senior Enlisted (E7-E9): MSgt Jeffery A. Dusich, USAF, Okinawa CDC, Camp Kinser, Okinawa (Japan), Northwest/Pacific Region.

Note: After 1995, there were no enlisted awards due to the military drawdown within DeCA.

UNSUNG HEROES AWARDS

(Presented only once, on October 2, 1992, in San Francisco)

Gina Klimpel, Eglin AFB, Fla., commissary

Cal Mullins, Homestead AFB, Fla., commissary

Mary Michael, NNSY Portsmouth, Va., commissary

Martha Bailey, Scott AFB, Ill., commissary

Ben Wainwright, Edgewood Arsenal, Md., commissary

George P. Taylor, McGuire AFB, N.J., commissary

Airman 1st Class Bob Norton, Carswell AFB, Texas, commissary

Sgt. Karla Fahrer, Lowry AFB, Colo., commissary

Marye A. Boyer, March AFB, Calif., commissary

Donna Romolton, Williams AFB, Ariz., commissary

Staff Sgt. John P. Callahan, Fairchild AFB, Wash., commissary

Harold V. Bauer, McChord AFB, Wash., commissary

Tech Sgt. Anthony Piccolo, Bitburg AB, Germany

Jon Wyatt, C. Lloyd-Johnson

Tim Lasley, Kellogg Sales Co.

Andrea-Hackeneis-Feagins, L. J. Elkin, Inc.

Susan Rosol, S & K Sales Co.

Nadja Sovich, S & K Sales Co.

SERVICE AWARDS, FY 1991

These were special, one-time awards given to the outstanding Army, Navy, and Air Force commissary enlisted person of the year for the fiscal year just prior to DeCA's opening.

ARMY

NCO of the Year: Staff Sgt. Terris M. Collins, Midwest Region.

NAVY

Petty Officer of the Year: Ship's Servicemen 1 Pat E. Lee, Northwest/Pacific Region.

AIR FORCE

Senior NCO of the Year: Senior Master Sgt. Michael W. Blackwell, Central Region.

NCO of the Year: Tech Sgt. Donald E. Lovely, Southwest Region.

Airman of the Year: Airman 1st Class Filipina G. Dianala, Midwest Region.

Appendix 16

DeCA Troop Support Personnel Deployed to Support Operations in Somalia (1992-1994) and Haiti (1994-1995)

(Source: DeCA historian's records; also, *DeCA Fact Book*, 1994-95, p. 18)
Ranks given as of the day individuals shipped out to their overseas duty stations.

SUPPORTING RELIEF OPERATIONS IN SOMALIA, 1993-94, INCLUDING DEPLOYMENTS TO KENYA AND CAIRO

(Base names given here were the bases from which the individuals left for Africa.)

Somalia:

Site commanders, Mogadishu: Senior Master Sgt. Randy Eller, RAF Bentwaters, UK; Senior Master Sgt. John Sidell, DeCA headquarters; Capt. Ron Smith, DeCA headquarters; Capt. Patrick Dunn, Scott AFB, Ill.

Assigned personnel: Sgt. Andrew Balidillez, Dyess AFB, Texas; Sgt. David Bailey, Edwards AFB, Calif.; Airman 1st Class Alisha Barclay, Moody AFB, Ga.; Staff Sgt. Kenneth Beckett, Langley AFB, Va.; Sgt. Luana Benavides, Maxwell AFB, Ala.; Sgt. Ansel Bingham, McGuire AFB, N.J.; Senior Airman Lloyd Blagrove, Dover AFB, Del.; Senior Airman Duane Bond, Bitburg AB, Germany; Staff Sgt. Randy Bozarth, Soesterberg AB, the Netherlands; Airman Jeffery Brown, Hanscom AFB, Maine; Senior Airman Michelle Brown, Andrews AFB, Md.; Senior Airman James Cabiness, McConnell AFB, Kan.; Sgt. Roland Cooper, Loring AFB, Maine; Capt. Scott Conrey, Bitburg AB, Germany; Senior Airman Ann Cordier, Hanscom AFB, Maine; Senior Airman Kimberly Craff, Barksdale AFB, La.; Tech Sgt. Michael Creagg, Patrick AFB, Fla.; Senior Airman Thomas Crowell, Elmendorf AFB, Alaska; Sgt. Roy Eby, Randolph AFB, Texas; Airman 1st Class T. J. Emmerling, Goodfellow AFB, Texas; Senior Airman Dennis Evangelista, Travis AFB, Calif.; Sgt. Scott Fallo, Keesler AFB, Miss.; Senior Airman Tanya Fields, Izmir AS, Turkey; Senior Airman Michelle Florida, Charleston AFB, S.C.; Staff Sgt. Daniel Fowler, F. E. Warren AFB, Wyo.; Senior Airman Kenneth Franklin, Kunsan AB, S. Korea; Sgt. Felicia Gomes, McClellan AFB, Calif.; Staff Sgt. Donald Graves, Cannon AFB, N.M.; Senior Airman Alan Gustafson, Shaw AFB, S.C.; Staff Sgt. Rodney Harvey, Keesler AFB, Miss.; Staff Sgt. Samuel Harvey, Loring AFB, Maine; Airman 1st Class Sean Hudson, Little Rock AFB, Ark.; Airman Kevin Jenkins, Holloman AFB, N.M.; Airman 1st Class Freddie King, Andrews AFB, Md.; Sgt. Scott Kirkpatrick, Andrews AFB, Md.; Airman Vincent Klezos, Hurlburt Field, Fla.; Staff Sgt. Phillip Leonhart, Minot AFB, N.D.; Staff Sgt. Jack Lewis, McGuire AFB, N.J.; Staff Sgt. Herman Lighthall, Nellis AFB, Nev.; Tech Sgt. Ralph Littlejohn, MacDill AFB, Fla.; Tech Sgt. Raymond Maltos, Sheppard AFB, Texas; Tech Sgt. Nicole Miller, Incirlik AB, Turkey; Staff Sgt. Howard Miteff, Offutt AFB, Neb.; Staff Sgt. Nuttaporn Ooppapan, Misawa AB, Japan; Senior Airman David Paquin, Griffiss AFB, N.Y.; Senior Airman Mark Pickens, Hickam AFB, Hawaii; Sgt. Dennis Rance, Patrick AFB, Fla.; Staff Sgt. Steven Rau, Mountain Home AFB, Idaho; Sgt. Donald Reynolds, Eglin AFB, Fla.; Senior Airman Jerry Roby, Vance AFB, Okla.; Sgt. Anthony Rogiano, San Vito

AB, Italy; Staff Sgt. James Romer, Norton AFB, Calif.; Senior Airman Mike Rosado, Scott AFB, Ill.; Airman Christopher Scaglione, Dover AFB, Del.; Tech Sgt. Rafael Serrati, Altus AFB, Okla.; Staff Sgt. Charles Sutherland, Seymour Johnson AFB, S.C.; Staff Sgt. Cleofas Trejo, Vandenberg AFB, Calif.; Master Sgt. Hector Vega, Lackland AFB, Texas; Senior Airman Robert White, MacDill AFB, Fla.; Staff Sgt. Charles Wilson, McGuire AFB, N.J.; Tech Sgt. Frederick Wilson, Cannon AFB, N.M.; Staff Sgt. Carlton Wright, Hurlburt Field, Fla.

Support Operations in Cairo

Airman 1st Class Zaneta Clymans, Hahn AB, Germany; Sgt. Gregory Hennaman, Rhein-Main AB, Germany; Tech Sgt. Albert Matsiak, Bitburg AB, Germany.

Operations in Mombasa, Kenya

Staff Sgt. Preston Dickens, Norton AFB, Calif.; Staff Sgt. William Easter, Hill AFB, Utah; Tech Sgt. Sylvia Evans, Langley AFB, Va.; Senior Airman Robert Herring, Nellis AFB, Nev.; Sgt. Brent Kern, McClellan AFB, Calif.; Senior Airman Nicholas Koester, Scott AFB, Ill.; Senior Airman James Richardson, K.I. Sawyer AFB, Mich.; Staff Sgt. Alfred Siapno, McClellan AFB, Calif.

DECA TROOP SUPPORT PERSONNEL DEPLOYED TO SUPPORT PEACEKEEPING EFFORTS IN HAITI, 1994-1995

OIC: Capt. Clayton McInally, Minot AFB, N.D.

Staff: Master Sgt. Devon Northover; Tech Sgt. Tony Chambers; Tech Sgt. Phillip Hyche; Staff Sgt. Timothy Williams; Staff Sgt. Angel Pratts; Sgt. Irvin Jones; Senior Airman Erick Dupree; Senior Airman Keith Jacobsen; Senior Airman Venessa Ziegler; Airman 1st Class Peter Alain; Airman 1st Class Michael Corell; Airman 1st Class Maria Dopson; Airman 1st Class David Nolen; Airman 1st Class Roger Mucuuthi; Airman 1st Class Michael Thornton; Airman 1st Class Anthony Wilson.

Appendix 17

Proposed BRAC 2005 Closures of Bases with Commissaries, after Adjustments in 2006-2008

FROM 1991 to 2007, DeCA CLOSED NEARLY 160 stores due to BRAC actions, service decisions that shut down entire installations, or to DeCA decisions to close antiquated stores. The latter happened only four times; the agency usually made efforts to keep stores running as long as possible, with or without financial help from the services.

Keeping stores open at closed installations

For years, DeCA had done its best to keep stores open where there was a sizable retiree population. It often took the costs for operating some stores out of its own pockets, but eventually it no longer had the budget to continue doing so. Wherever closures occurred, the rule of thumb was that if a hundred active-duty remained at or near a closed installation, a commissary could stay open. Sometimes the facility that stayed open was a scaled-back version of the old store, but it was far better than nothing at all. Occasionally, the services themselves requested certain stores remain open beyond their scheduled closure dates, and, after the budget crisis of 1997, they provided funds for such extensions.

After several years of calm on the base closure issue, when the first Base Realignment and Closure 2005 list came out on May 13, 2005, there was little DeCA could do except note that this list was the first proposal; it was not yet final. Initially, BRAC 2005 proposed closures at ten bases with commissary sales stores: New London (Groton), Connecticut; Naval Supply Corps School Athens, Fort Gillem, and Fort McPherson, Georgia; Fort Monmouth, New Jersey; Naval Support Activity New Orleans, Louisiana; Naval Shipyard Portsmouth, Maine/New Hampshire; Cannon Air Force Base, New Mexico; C. E. Kelly Support Facility, Oakdale, Pennsylvania; and Ellsworth Air Force Base, South Dakota.

Increasing military populations

The BRAC list emphasized readjustments and realignments as much as it did closures. For some installations, the list might not call for outright base closure, but it could call for troop reductions that would seriously impact local store operations. Some sizeable population increases were slated for bases with commissary facilities that might not be adequate to support the new populations. In other words, while DeCA might lose some facilities, it stood to gain some new locations where it would have to build new facilities, and it would have to enlarge others to cope with larger base populations.

At bases with existing commissaries, significant military personnel increases were slated for Fort Carson, Colorado; Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay and Fort Benning, Georgia; Fort Riley, Kansas; Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada; Fort Bragg, North Carolina; Fort Sill, Oklahoma; Fort Bliss and Fort Sam Houston, Texas; and Fort Belvoir, Fort Lee, and Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia.

Changes to the list

This list was the first proposal, not final, and adjustments were soon made. Among bases with commissaries, the commission added Naval Air Station Oceana, Virginia, to the list of possible closures. The commission decided in September 2005 that Ellsworth Air Force Base, South Dakota, Naval Submarine Base New London, Connecticut, and Naval Shipyard Portsmouth, Maine/New Hampshire, all of which had been on the original closure list, would instead remain open. Meanwhile, the services had requested the establishment of several commissaries at some entirely new locations in the upcoming years, which would expand the benefit to new geographical areas.

In August 2005 the BRAC commission approved the merger of the Midwest and Eastern regions with the Hopewell (Virginia) office, which cut DeCA costs and placed the Eastern Region offices in a secure on-post location. Security concerns in the post-9/11 era prompted DeCA to begin planning a headquarters addition that would enable all its off-post offices in the Fort Lee area to move onto the installation.

The commission's recommendations were delivered to the president for approval and submission to Congress. Even if some bases with commissaries eventually do close, DeCA would determine if it could keep some of these bases' commissaries open, especially in areas where the demographics show a high concentration of active duty, National Guard, Reservists, and retirees.

The list was finalized in September, but no final decision had been made on NAS Oceana until it was removed from the list in January 2007.

All Known Commissary Locations (1867 - 2008)

THIS IS A LIST of all known and probable commissary locations run by each of the four American armed services, plus several commissary-only stores run by the Coast Guard, since 1867. This is the first such list ever compiled and published. It is a work in progress. We are still verifying whether or not commissary sales took place at dozens of World War II-era installations.

All locations confirmed (as of 2007) to have had a sales commissary are listed here, as are many *probable* commissary sites at nineteenth-century posts. Also shown (when available) are the stores' known dates of operation and service affiliation and the years installations in the U.S. opened.

The stores are listed alphabetically and arranged into two groups: U.S. (including Alaska and Hawaii) and Overseas (including U.S. territories and protectorates). Due to incomplete and sometimes contradictory records on commissary locations from 1867 to 1976, we do not pretend that this listing is without error or omission. Wherever the data is questionable, we have alerted the reader accordingly.

Years listed without question marks, asterisks, or other approximation symbols are documented and confirmed as actual years of operation. **However, these figures should not be taken as exclusive**, since a given location may have had a commissary for years before or after the years we list, or may have closed for a few years before reopening, but we have not yet discovered documentation showing this to be the case. Speculative, unverified, and uncertain years of operation are shown with special symbols to indicate research yet to be accomplished.

A symbol for “**approximately**” (@) is placed next to years known to be close to correct, but unconfirmed. **An asterisk** after the dates indicates possible (but unverified) years of commissary operation, and usually denotes posts confirmed to have been in existence in 1867. The dates of operation for these posts are usually correct; it is the operation of the commissary that is in question. We assume all major posts conducted sales from their storehouses as of July 1, 1867, but we have not yet been able to actually verify sales at all such locations. **Hyphens (-)** are used when the opening date of the store or installation is unknown. A hyphen before the date given (e.g., -1941, or -1941 — 1995) indicates the year given is the first known year of operation (in these examples, 1941), but the installation or store was probably open before that year.

A question mark given after a year indicates an educated guess; **question marks standing alone**, with no year indicated, signify that not even a reasonable guess could be made as to the correct date. A question mark next to the year of store opening or store closing shows that while sales are known to have been conducted at that particular site, the year the store opened or closed (or both) is uncertain. In all such cases, research continues, and brings in new information on a daily basis; anyone with a question, or additional information, about a particular post, should contact us.

Overseas

In Panama, Panama Canal Commission stores are listed because they were open to U.S. military and their families. In Europe, many stores started operating during World War II or immediately thereafter, but often the first year for which we have documentation was 1960, when *Military Market* published a list of stores in Europe. We have listed these stores with dates such as “1945?-1960-present,” indicating (in this example) the store may have opened during or immediately after World War II (therefore the use of the year 1945), but 1960 is presently our earliest documentation for the location, and (again in this example) there is still a store operating at this location. So 1960 should be regarded as the first confirmed year of operation—at least, until better documentation presents itself.

Closures and Reopenings

Dates are shown when trustworthy information is available. For example, some stores closed in 1949 as the result of legislation attempting to close commissaries where “adequate” civilian stores were available, but were reopened in 1950-53. Ankara, Turkey, closed in 1994, but reopened at a new location in 2000. Where such locations have been confirmed, they are listed as such.

Name and Designation Changes

Since many installations have changed their names and designations over the years, we have provided some cross-referencing. It was commonplace that a *Camp* later become a *Fort*, so it is usually listed only under *Fort*. The same is true for camps, forts, Army airfields or flying schools that later became Air Force bases: usually, the designation of Air Force base is the sole listing. If a particular post was known for many years by one name, and then for many subsequent years by another, it is often listed under both names. Fort D. A. Russel/F.E. Warren AFB is one example; Fort Jay/Governors Island is another. To facilitate finding naval installations, they are listed alphabetically by location name.

Sources

Multiple sources were used in this compilation. These included Capt. Charles J. Sullivan's *Army Posts and Towns: The Baedeker of the Army* (1935); *The Army Almanac: A Book of Facts Concerning the United States Army* (1959); C. B. Colby's *Historic American Forts: From Frontier Stockade to Coastal Fortress* (1963); the *Army Times Guide to Army Posts* (1966); Robert Mueller's *Active Air Force Bases Within the United States of America* (1982); Kent Ruth's *Landmarks of the West: A Guide to Historic Sites*, (1986); Sgt. Maj. (Ret) Dan Cragg's *Guide to Military Installations* (1988); Robert B. Roberts' *Encyclopedia of Historic Forts: The Military, Pioneer, and Trading Posts of the United States* (1988); and annual commissary guides published by *Military Market* and *Exchange and Commissary News* from the mid-1950s through 1991. An online source available in 2005, Joe McCusker's *List of Air Force Bases*, helped fill in a lot of information gaps.

PART 1: COMMISSARIES IN THE 50 UNITED STATES

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u>	<u>BASE ESTABLISHED</u>	<u>COMSY OPERATION</u> * indicates unconfirmed
Aberdeen PG, Aberdeen, Md.	1918	1934-present
Abilene AFB, Abilene, Texas (<i>see Dyess AFB</i>)		
Adair AFS, Corvallis, Oregon	1962	1962-67
NS Adak, Adak, Alaska	1942	1960-94
Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colo.	1958	1958-present
NAS Alameda, Oakland, Calif.	1936	1948-9; 1956?-97
Alameda Annex, Alameda, Calif. (<i>also known as Alameda Administration Center; Alameda Medical Depot</i>)	-1948	1948-9?
Alamogordo Army AB/AAF, Alamogordo, N.M. (<i>see Holloman AFB</i>)		
MCLB Albany, Albany, Ga.	1964	1964-present
Albuquerque AAB/Municipal Airport (<i>see Kirtland AFB</i>)		
Alesandro AF (<i>see March AFB/ARB</i>)		
Alexandria AFB/AAB/AAF/Municipal Airport (<i>see England AFB</i>)		
Alexandria Transmitter Station, Va.	?	?-1953
Almaden AFS, San Jose, Calif. (<i>aka New Almaden AFS</i>)	1958	1966-80
Altus AFB, Altus, Okla. (<i>previously known as Altus AAF</i>)	1942	1956-present
Amarillo AFB, Amarillo, Texas	1956	1956-67
Anacostia Flying Field, Washington, D.C. (<i>see Bolling AFB</i>)		
Anchorage Area, Anchorage, Alaska (* Located on Anchorage AFB; serves Fort Richardson and Elmendorf AFB)	(<i>not a base*</i>)	1999-present
Andrews AFB, Camp Springs, Md.	1943	1948-present
Annapolis (U.S. Naval Academy)	1845	store closed 1949
Annapolis Naval Station, Annapolis, Md.	1845	1948- present
Anniston AD, Anniston, Ala.	1941	1941-65?
Antigo AFS, Antigo, Wis.	-1970	1970-77
Arctic Training Center, Delta Junction, Alaska (<i>see Fort Greely</i>)		
ARDEC, Dover, N.J. (<i>see Picatinny Arsenal</i>)		
Ardmore AAF/AFB, Ardmore, Okla.	1942	1942-46; 1954-59
Army Chemical Center, Baltimore, Md. (<i>see Edgewood Arsenal</i>)		
Army Engineer Center, Accotink, Va. (<i>see Fort Belvoir</i>)		
Army Medical Center, Washington, D.C. (<i>see Walter Reed AMC</i>)		
Army-Navy Hospital, Hot Springs, Ark. (<i>aka Army-Navy General Hospital</i>)	1887	1948-55
Army War College, Carlisle, Pa. (<i>see Carlisle Barracks</i>)		
Army War College, Washington, D.C. (<i>see Fort McNair</i>)		
Arnold AFB, Manchester/Tullahoma, Tenn. (<i>previously Camp Peay and Camp Forrest; aka Arnold Engineering Development Center</i>)	1926	1942-45; 1965- present
NSCS Athens, Athens, Ga.	1942	1955- present
Atlanta Army Depot, Forest Park, Ga. (<i>see Fort Gillem</i>)		
Atlanta General Depot (<i>see Fort Gillem</i>)		
NWS Atlantic, Polaris Missile Facility, S.C.	1966	1966
Auburn General Depot, Auburn, Wash.	1952	1952
Augusta Arsenal, Augusta, Ga.	1926	1934
Avon Park AFB, Avon Park, Fla.	1942	1984-94
NTC Bainbridge, Bainbridge, Md.	1942	1948-74
NAS Banana River, Fla. (<i>see Patrick AFB</i>)		
Bangor AFB, Bangor, Maine (<i>aka Dow AFB</i>)	1941	1948-68, 1970 - present
NSB Bangor, Bangor Wash. (<i>see NS Kitsap; aka Bangor Ammunition Depot</i>)		

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u>	<u>BASE ESTABLISHED</u>	<u>COMSY OPERATION</u> <i>* indicates unconfirmed</i>
NAS Barber's Point, Hawaii (<i>aka Kalaeloa</i>)	1944	1944 - present
Barksdale AFB, Shreveport, La.	1933	1948- present
MCLB Barstow, Barstow, Calif.	1942	1948- present
Baudette AFS, Baudette, Minn.	1966?	1966-79
Beale AFB, Marysville, Calif.	1942	1956- present
MCAS Beaufort, Beaufort, S.C.	1943	1966
Bedford AFS, Bedford, Va.	1970	1970-75
NAS Beeville, Beeville, Texas (<i>see Chase Field</i>)		
Belle Fourche AFS, Belle Fourche, S.D.	1988	1988-96
Bellwood Depot, Richmond, Va. (<i>see Defense Supply Center Richmond</i>)		
Benicia Arsenal, Benicia, Calif.	1849	1914-34
Benton AFS, Red Rock, Pa.	1970	1970-75
Bergstrom AFB, Austin, Texas	1942	1948-93
Big Delta Post, Alaska (<i>see Fort Greeley</i>)		
Biggs Army Airfield, El Paso, Texas (<i>aka Biggs AFB; Also see Fort Bliss</i>)	1915	1948-71
Birmingham AFB, Birmingham, Ala.	1948?	1948-49
Black Hills AD, Edgemont, S.D. (<i>aka Black Hills Ordnance Depot</i>)	1942	1942?-1967?
Blaine AFS, Blaine, Wash.	1964	1964-81
Bluegrass AD, town, Ky. (<i>see Lexington-Bluegrass AD</i>)		
Blytheville AFB, Blytheville, Ark. (<i>see Eaker AFB</i>)		
Bolling AFB, Washington, D.C. (<i>previously Anacostia Flying Field</i>)	1918	1948-present
Boron AFS, Victorville, Calif.	1964	1964-75
NS Bremerton, Bremerton, Wash. (<i>see NS Kitsap-Bremerton; aka NSY Puget Sound</i>)		
Brookley AFB, Mobile, Ala.	1948?	1948-69
NS Brooklyn, Brooklyn, N.Y.	1945?	1945?-54
Brooks AFB, San Antonio, Texas	1918	1934-2001
NAS Brunswick, Brunswick, Maine	1959	1959-present
Bryan AFB, Bryan, Texas	1956	1956-58
Buckley AFB, Colo. (<i>previously Buckley ANGB</i>)	2002	2002-present
Bunker Hill AFB, Kokomo/Peru, Ind. (<i>see Grissom AFB</i>)		
Burns AF Radio Station, Burns, Ore.	1970?	1970
NF Buxton, town, N.C. (<i>also see Cape Hatteras annex</i>)	1961	1961-82?
Callender Field, New Orleans, La. (<i>see New Orleans Naval Station</i>)		
Calumet AFS, Calumet, Mich.	1957	1964-88
Cambria AFS, Cambria, Calif.	1964	1964-80
Cameron Station, Alexandria, Va. (<i>previously Washington General Depot</i>)	1948	1948-95
Camp Alfred Vale, Ocean Port, N.J. (<i>see Fort Monmouth</i>)		
Camp Atterbury, Columbus, Ind.	1942	1942-49, 1950-56
Camp Breckinridge, Morganfield, Ky.	1942	1942-49, 1950-53
Camp Carlin, Laramie County, Wyo.	1867	1867-88*
Camp Cook, Tangair, Calif.	1948	1948-49
Camp Dunlap, Walnut Creek, Calif.	@1943	@1943-45
Camp at Eagle Pass, Maverick County, Texas (<i>also see Fort Duncan</i>)	1886	1886-1927*
Camp Edwards, Mass.	1942	1950-53?,
Camp Forrest, Tullahoma, Tenn. (<i>previously, Camp Peay; later, Arnold AFB</i>)	1926	1942-45
Camp Gary, San Marcos, Texas (<i>see San Marcos AFB</i>)		
Camp Grant, Pinal County, Ariz. (<i>see Fort Brekinridge</i>)		

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u>	<u>BASE ESTABLISHED</u>	<u>COMSY OPERATION</u> <i>* indicates unconfirmed</i>
Camp Haan, Riverside, Calif.	1943-44	
Camp Hanford, Richland, Wash.	1950	1950-62
Camp Hudson, Val Verde County, Texas	1857	1868
Camp Hulen, Palacios, Texas	1941	1941
Camp Johnson, New Orleans, La. (<i>see Camp Leroy Johnson; New Orleans Army AFB</i>)		
Camp Joyce Kilmer, New Brunswick, N.J.	1948	1948-49, 1951-55
MCB Camp Lejeune, Jacksonville, N.C. (<i>also see Hadnot Point and Tarawa Terrace</i>)	1941	1993-present
Camp Leroy Johnson, New Orleans, La.	1948	1948-64
Camp Livingston, Grant Parish, La. (<i>aka Camp Tioga</i>)	1942	1942
Camp Locket, Campo, Calif.	1942	1942
Camp Lyon, Owyhee County, Idaho	1865	1865-69
Camp Merrill, Dahlonga, Ga.	1942	1942-present
MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif. (<i>also see Sterling Housing and San Onofre</i>)	1942	1948-present
Camp Roberts, San Miguel, Calif.	1941	1941-45, 1950-53
Camp San Luis Obispo, San Luis Obispo, Calif.	1953	1953
Camp Sheridan, Sheridan County, Neb.	1874	1874-?
Camp Skeel, Oscada, Mich. (<i>see Wurtsmith AFB</i>)		
Camp Stoneman, Pittsburg, Calif.	1948	1948-54
Camp Supply, Okla. (<i>see Fort Supply</i>)		
Camp Toccoa, Toccoa, Ga.	1940	1942-45
Camp Verde, Kerr County, Texas	1856	1868-69
Camp Winfield Scott, Humboldt County, Nev.	1866	1868-71
Cannon AFB, Clovis, N.M.	1942	1953-present
Cantonment Reno, Wyo. (<i>see Fort McKinney #1</i>)		
Cape Charles AFS, Kiptopeke, Va.	1964	1964-81
Cape May Coast Guard Recruiting Center, Sewell Point, N.J.	1917	1963-?
NF Cape Hatteras, N.C. (<i>included NF Buxton as an annex</i>)	1960	1960-82
Carlisle Barracks, Carlisle, Pa. (<i>aka Army War College</i>)	1767	1867?-1934-present
Carswell AFB, Fort Worth, Texas (<i>previously Tarrant Field</i>)	1942	1948-93; 2008 -
Castle AFB, Merced, Calif.	1941	1948-95
NAS Cecil Field, Jacksonville, Fla.	1942	1959-99
C. E. Kelly Support Facility, Oakdale, Pa.	1958	1962-present
Chandler AFS, Chandler (<i>Murray County</i>), Minn.	1966	1966-70
Chanute AFB, Rantoul, Ill.	1917	1934-93
Charles E. Kelly Support Facility (<i>see C.E. Kelly Support Facility</i>)		
Charles M. Price Support Center, Ill. (<i>see C.M. Price Support Center</i>)		
Charleston AFB, Charleston, S.C.	1956	1956-present
NS Charleston, Charleston, S.C. (<i>aka Naval Base Charleston</i>)	1948	1948-49; ?-1995
Charleston Naval Weapons Station, Charleston, S.C. (<i>aka Goose Creek</i>)	1972	1975-present
Charlotte Quartermaster Depot, N.C.	1948	1948-49
NAS Chase Field, Beeville, Texas (<i>aka NAS Beeville</i>)	1959	1959-92
Chatham AFB, Savannah, Ga. (<i>later, Travis Field ANGB; now Savannah/Hilton Head LAF</i>)	1942	?-1949
Chennault AFB, Lake Charles, La. (<i>aka Lake Charles AS/AFB</i>)	1956	1956-63
MCAS Cherry Point, Havelock, N.C.	1942	1948-present
Chilkoot Barracks, Haines, Alaska (<i>aka Haines Mission; Fort Seward; Fort William H. Seward</i>)	1898	1934-43
NAWC China Lake, Ridgecrest, Calif.	1959	1959-present

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u>	<u>BASE ESTABLISHED</u>	<u>COMSY OPERATION</u> * indicates unconfirmed
NAAS Chincoteague, Chincoteague, Va.	1948	1948-49
Clear Creek Commissary, Fort Hood, Texas (<i>see Fort Hood</i>)		
NSD Clearfield, Ogden, Utah	1948	1948-49
Clinton-Sherman AFB, Okla. (<i>aka Sherman AFB</i>)	1958	1958-70
C. M. Price Support Center, Granite City, Ill.	1942	1948-49; @1950-?
(<i>aka Charles M. Price Support Center; Granite City Engineering Depot; Granite City Army Depot</i>)	1964	1964-2000
Columbia Barracks, Wash. (<i>see Vancouver Barracks</i>)		
Columbus AFB, Columbus, Miss.	1959	1959-present
Columbus Barracks, Columbus, Ohio (<i>see Fort Hayes</i>)		
Condon AFB, Portland, Ore.	1964	1964-70
Connally AFB, Waco, Texas	1942	1942-45; 1947-49; 1951-66
(<i>aka James Connally AFB; Waco AFB</i>)		
Conrad AFS, Conrad, Mont.	1987	1987-93
Cooke AFB, Lompoc, Calif. (<i>see Vandenberg AFB</i>)		
NAS Corpus Christi, Corpus Christi, Texas	1942	1942-present
Cottonwood AFS, Cottonwood, Idaho	1964	1964-65
Craig AFB, Selma, Ala.	1948	1948-77
NSWC Crane, Crane, Ind.	1948	1948-present
Custer AFS, Battle Creek, Mich. (<i>aka Camp Custer; Fort Custer; included Percy Jones General Hospital</i>)	1917	1934-53
Cut Bank AFS, Cut Bank (<i>Glacier County</i>), Mont.	1964	1964-65
NCTS Cutler, Cutler, Maine	1960	1960-2001
NSWC Dahlgren, Dahlgren, Va. (<i>aka Dahlgren Naval Weapons Lab</i>)	1919	1919-present
Dauphin Island AFS, Dauphin Island, Ala.	1966	1966-70
Davis-Monthan AFB, Tucson, Ariz.	1925	1948-present
DDC [Defense Distribution Center] (<i>see New Cumberland</i>)		
DDRE [Defense Distribution Center East] (<i>see New Cumberland</i>)		
Defense Depot Ogden, Ogden, Utah (<i>aka Utah General Depot</i>)	1941	1948-49
Defense General Supply Center, Richmond, Va. (<i>aka DGSC: See Defense Supply Center, Richmond</i>)		
Defense Supply Center, Richmond, Richmond, Va.	1942	1948-2001
(<i>aka Bellwood; DSCR; Defense General Supply Center, Richmond; Richmond General Depot; US Army Support Command</i>)		
Deseret Chemical Depot, Toole City/Deseret, Utah	1942	1953-56
DGSC (<i>see Defense Supply Center, Richmond</i>)		
Dickinson AFS, Dickinson, N.D.	1987	1987-94
Dobbins AFB, Marietta, Ga.	1943	1943-?
Donaldson AFB, Greenville, S.C.. (<i>renamed 1951; previously aka Greenville AAB</i>)	1942	1956-63 (base closed 1964)
Dover AFB, Dover, Del.	1954	1954-present
Dow AFB, Bangor, Maine (<i>see Bangor AFB</i>)		
DPSC (<i>Defense Personnel Support Center; see Philadelphia QM Depot</i>)		
DSCR (<i>see Defense Supply Center, Richmond</i>)		
Dugway Proving Ground, Dugway, Utah (<i>includes Western Chemical Ctr.</i>)	1942	1950-present
Duluth IAP, Duluth, Minn.	1958	1958-82
Duncan Field, San Antonio, Texas (<i>merged with Kelly Field/Kelly AFB</i>)		
Dyess AFB, Abilene, Texas (<i>previously Tye Field and Abilene AFB</i>)	1942	1958-present
Eaker AFB, Blytheville, Ark. (<i>aka Blytheville AFB</i>)	1942	1958-92
Edgewood Arsenal, Baltimore, Md. (<i>aka Army Chemical Center</i>)	1918	1948-94
Edwards AFB, Muroc, Calif. (<i>aka Muroc AFB</i>)	1933	1948-present
Eglin AFB, Valparaiso, Fla.	1937	1944-present

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u>	<u>BASE ESTABLISHED</u>	<u>COMSY OPERATION</u> * indicates unconfirmed
Eielson AFB, Alaska (<i>previously known as Mile 26</i>)	1943	1960-present
NAF El Centro, El Centro, Calif.	1943	1966-present
Eleventh Naval District, Pacific and E Street, San Diego, Calif.	1921	?-1949
Ellington AFB, Houston, Texas	1948	1948-75
Ellsworth AFB, Rapid City, S.D. (<i>previously Rapid City AFB</i>)	1942	1948-present
Elmendorf AFB, Anchorage, Alaska (<i>old Fort Richardson</i>)	1940	1952-99
MCAS El Toro, Irvine, Calif.	1943	1948-2000
Empire AFB, Empire, Mich.	1966	1966-78
England AFB, Alexandria, La. (<i>previously Alexandria AFB</i>)	1939	1956-92
Enid AFB, Okla. (<i>see Vance AFB</i>)		
Ent AFB, Colorado Springs, Colo.	1951	1951-78
Erie Army Depot, LaCarn, Ohio (<i>previously Erie Ordnance Depot</i>)	1934	1934-48
Ethan Allen AFB, Vt. (<i>previously Fort Ethan Allen</i>)	1892	1934-60
NS Everett, Wash. (<i>see Smokey Point</i>)		
Fairchild AFB, Spokane, Wash. (<i>previously Spokane AFB, Spokane Army Air Depot</i>)	1942	1948-49; 1956-present
Fairfield AD, Fairfield, Ohio (<i>later, Annexed by Wright-Patterson AFB</i>)	1934	1934-35
Fairfield-Suisun AFB, Calif. (<i>see Travis AFB</i>)		
NAS Fallon, Fallon, Nev.	1944	1966-present
Finland AFS, Finland, Minn.	1966	1966-80
Finley AFS, Finley, N.D.	1975	1975-79
Fitzsimmons Army Hospital, Aurora, Colo. (<i>aka Fitzsimmons General Hospital</i>)	1918	1948-2002
Forbes AFB, Topeka, Kan. (<i>aka Topeka AFB</i>)	1948	1948-49; 1956-73
NAS Ford Island, Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, Oahu, Hawaii (<i>formerly Luke Field</i>)	1917	1935-41-?, 1960-72
Forsyth AFS, Forsyth, Mont.	1986	1986-95
Fort Abercrombie, Richland County, N.D.	1857	1867-78*
Fort Abraham Lincoln (<i>Old</i>), Morton County, near Bismarck, N.D. (<i>aka Fort McKean; Old Fort Lincoln</i>)	1872	1872-91
Fort Abraham Lincoln, N. D. (<i>New</i>) (<i>aka New Fort Lincoln</i>)	1896-99	1896?-1934
Fort Adams, Newport, R.I.	1799	1934-49
Fort Alcatraz, Alcatraz Island, San Francisco, Calif.	1859	1867-1907*
Fort Apache, Navajo County, Ariz.	1869	1869-1924*
Fort Armstrong, Honolulu, Hawaii	1934	1934-54
Fort Arbuckle, Garvin County, Okla.	1851	1867-70*
Fort Assiniboine, Hill County, Mont.	1879	1879-1911*
Fort Banks, Winthrop, Mass.	1894	1934-49
Fort Barrancas, Pensacola, Fla. (<i>aka Fort San Carlos de Barrancas</i>)	1839	1867-34*
Fort Bascom, San Miguel County, N.M.	1863	1867-70*
Fort Bayard, Grant County, N.M.	1866	1867-1900*
Fort Bidwell, Modoc County, Calif.	1865	1867-93*
Fort Belknap, Young County, Texas	1851	1867-76*
Fort Belvoir, Accotink, Va. (<i>aka Army Engineering Center</i>)	1912	1934-present
Fort Benjamin Harrison, Ind. (<i>see Harrison Village</i>)		
Fort Bennett, N.D. (<i>originally, Cheyenne River Agency or, simply, Cheyenne Agency</i>),	1870	1870-91*
Fort Benning, Columbus, Ga.	1918	1933-present
Fort Benton, Chouteau County, Mont.	1869	1869-81*
Fort Berthold, Fort Berthold Reservation, N.D.	1864	1867-74*
Fort Bliss, El Paso, Texas (<i>also see Biggs AAF</i>)	1848	1934-present
Fort Boise, Ada County, Idaho	1863	1867-1913*
Fort Bowie, Cochise County, Ariz.	1862	1867-96*

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u>	<u>BASE ESTABLISHED</u>	<u>COMSY OPERATION</u> * indicates unconfirmed
Fort Brady, Sault Sainte Marie, Minn.	1886	1934-44, ?-1950-?
Fort Bragg, Fayetteville, N.C.	1918	1934-present
<u>Specific known store locations:</u>		
Annex #1	1918	- 1950s - ?
Annex #2	1918	- 1950s - ?
Annex #3 (<i>aka Mallonee Village</i>)	1918	- 1970-2000
Annex #4 (<i>aka Pope AFB</i>)	1918	- 1968-2001
North Post	1918	1974-present
South Post	1918	2000-present
Fort Bragg, Mendocino County, Calif. (<i>no commissary; it is included here simply to distinguish it from Fort Bragg N.C.</i>)	1857-64	none
Fort Breckinridge, Pinal County, Ariz. (<i>Old Camp Grant</i>)	1860	1867-73*
Fort Bridger, Uinta County, Wyo.	1858	1867-90*
Fort Brown, Brownsville, Texas	1934	1934-44
Fort Buchanan, Santa Cruz County, Ariz. (<i>aka Camp Crittenden</i>)	1856-61, 67-73	1867-73*
Fort Buford, McKenzie/Williams County, N.D.	1866	1867-95*
Fort Campbell, Hopkinsville, Ky./Clarksville, Tenn.	1942	1948-present
Fort Carson, Colorado Springs, Colo.	1942	1948-present
Fort Casper, Natrona County, Wyo. (<i>sometimes spelled Caspar</i>)	1864	1867*
Fort C. F. Smith, Bighorn County, Mont. (<i>aka Fort Smith</i>)	1866	1867-68*
Fort Chadbourne, Coke County, Texas	1852	1867*
Fort Chaffee, Barling, Ark.	1941	1948-65
Fort Churchill, Lyon County, Nev.	1860	1867-71*
Fort Clark, Kinney County, Texas	1852	1934-47?
Fort Cobb, Caddo County, Okla.	1859	1867-69*
Fort Concho, San Angelo, Tom Green County, Texas	1867	1868-89
Fort Connor, Wyo. (<i>see Fort Reno</i>)		
Fort Craig, Socorro County, N.M.	1854	1867-85*
Fort Crockett, Galveston, Texas	1897	1934-49; ?-1954
Fort Crook, Bellevue, Nebraska (<i>see Offutt AFB</i>)		
Fort Cummings, Luna County, N.M.	1863	1867-73* 1880-86*
Fort Custer, Battle Creek, Mich. (<i>see Custer AFS</i>)		
Fort Custer, Big Horn County, Mont.	1877	1877-98*
Fort Dalles, Wasco County, Ore.	1850	1867*
Fort Davis, Jeff Davis County, Texas	1854	1888-91
Fort D. A. Russell, Wyoming (<i>see F.E. Warren AFB</i>)		
Fort Delaware, Delaware City, Del.	1819	1864 (storehouse)-68-?
Fort DeRussy, Honolulu, Hawaii	1934	1934-35
Fort Des Moines, Des Moines, Iowa	1934	1934-47?
Fort Detrick, Frederick, Md.	1943	1992-present
Fort Devens, Ayer, Md.	1917	1934-97
Fort Dix, Wrightstown, N.J.	1917	1934-82
Fort Dodge, Ford County, Kan.	1865	1867-82*
Fort Douglas, Salt Lake County, Utah	1862	1934-47; <i>post did not close until 1967</i>
Fort Drum, Watertown, N.Y.	1908	1954-present
Fort Duncan, Maverick County, Texas (<i>see Camp at Eagle Pass</i>)	1848	1867-83?
Fort DuPont, Delaware City, Del.	1864	?-comsy in 1934
Fort Elliott, Texas	@1866	1867-90*
Fort Ellis, Gallatin County, Mont.	1867	1867-86*

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u>	<u>BASE ESTABLISHED</u>	<u>COMSY OPERATION</u> * indicates unconfirmed
Fort Ellsworth, Kan. (<i>see Fort Harker</i>)		
Fort Ethan Allen, Vermont (<i>see Ethan Allen AFB</i>)	1892	1934-47
Fort Eustis, Lee Hall, Va.	1918	1948-present
Fort Fetterman, Converse County, Wyo.	1867	1882*
Fort Fisher AFS, Wilmington, N.C. (<i>aka Camp Davis; Camp Davis AAF</i>)	1966	1966-88
Fort Flagler, Nordland, Wash.	1897	1953?
Fort Francis E. Warren, Cheyenne, Wyo. (<i>see Francis E. Warren AFB</i>)		
Fort Fred Steele, Carbon County, Wyo.	1868	1868-86*
Fort Fremont, St. Helena Island, S.C.	1898	1901-11*
Fort Gaines, Dauphin Island, Ala.	1821	1867-1926*
Fort Galveston, Galveston, Texas	@1866	867-90*
Fort Garland, Costilla County, Colo.	1858	1867-83*
Fort George Crook, Bellevue, Neb. (<i>see Offutt AFB</i>)		
Fort George G. Meade, Md. (<i>see Fort Meade</i>)		
Fort George Wright, Spokane, Wash.	1895	1934-47?
Fort Gibson, Muskogee County, Okla.	1824	1867-90*
Fort Gillem, Forest Park, Ga. (<i>previously known as Atlanta Quartermaster Depot; Atlanta Depot; Atlanta General Depot</i>)	1941	1948-present
Fort Gordon, Grovetown/Augusta, Ga.	1873	1905
Fort Grant, Graham County, Ariz. (<i>aka New camp Grant; replaced Fort Breckenridge</i>)	1942	1954-present
Fort Greely, Alaska (<i>previously Big Delta Post; Cold Regions Test Center; Station 17, Alaskan Wing, Air Transport Command; Arctic Training Center; Army Arctic Center</i>)		
Fort Griffin, Shackelford County, Texas	1867	1867-81*
Fort Hall, Bingham County, Idaho	1870	1870-83*
Fort Halleck, Elko County, Nev.	1867	1867-86*
Fort Hamilton, Brooklyn, N.Y. (<i>previously known as Fort Lewis</i>)	1825	1934-49; 1951-present
Fort Hancock, Sandy Hook/Highland Beach, N.J.	1890s	1934-49, 1953-?
Fort Hancock, Texas	@1866	1867-90*
Fort Harker, Ellsworth County, Kanopolis, Kan. (<i>aka Fort Ellsworth</i>)	1864	1867-73*
Fort Harney, Harney County, Ore.	1867	1867-80*
Fort Hartsuff, Valley County, Neb.	1874	1874-81*
Fort Hayes, Columbus, Ohio (<i>formerly Columbus Barracks</i>)	1863	1934-47?
Fort Hays, Ellis County, Kan.	1865	1867-89*
Fort H.G. Wright, Fishers Island, N.Y. (<i>aka Fort Wright</i>)	1934	1934-49
Fort Holabird, Holabird/Baltimore, Md. (<i>previously Holabird Quartermaster Depot</i>)	1934	1934-71
Fort Hood, Killeen, Texas	1942	1948-present
Clear Creek Commissary		1975-present
Warrior Way Commissary		1942?-1948?-present
Fort Howard, North Point, Patapsco River, Md.	1934	1934-47?
Fort Hoyle, Gun Powder Neck, Harford County, Md. (<i>created from part of Edgewood Arsenal</i>)	1922	1934-40
Fort Huachuca, Sierra Vista, Ariz.	1877	1914-49; 1951-present
Fort Humboldt, Humboldt County, Calif.	1853	1867*
Fort Humphreys, Va. (<i>see Fort Belvoir</i>)		
Fort Hunter Liggett, Monterey, Calif. (<i>previously Hunter Liggett Military Reservation</i>)	1940	1991-present
Fort Indianola, Matagorda Bay, Texas (<i>formerly Fort St. Louis</i>)	@1866	1867-90*

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u>	<u>BASE ESTABLISHED</u>	<u>COMSY OPERATION</u> <i>* indicates unconfirmed</i>
Fort Indiantown Gap, Annville, Pa.	1941	1941-49; 1951-53
Fort Inge, Texas	@1866	1867-90*
Fort Irwin, Barstow, Calif. (previously known as Mojave Antiaircraft Range, Fort Irwin National Training Center)	1953	1953-present
Fort Jackson, Savannah, Ga. (see Fort Oglethorpe)		
Fort Jackson, Columbia, S.C.	1917	1948-49; 1951-present
Fort Jay, N.Y. (see Governors Island Coast Guard Station)		
Fort Jefferson, Dry Tortugas, Fla.	1846	1867-74*
Fort Kamehameha, Oahu, Hawaii (see Hickam AFB)		
Fort Kearny, Nebraska City, Neb.	1847	1867-71*
Fort Kearny, Story, Wyo. (see Fort Phil Kearny)		
Fort Keogh, Custer County, Mont. (aka Tongue River Cantonment)	1876	1876-1908*, 1917-24*
Fort Klamath, Klamath County, Ore.	1863	1867-89*
Fort Knox, Fort Knox, Ky.	1918	1934-present
Fort Lancaster, Crockett County, Texas	1855-61, 1871-?	1871?-?
Fort Laramie, Goshen County, Fort Laramie, Wyo.	1834	1867-90*
Fort Larned, Pawnee County, Kan.	1859	1867-82*
Fort Lawton, Interbay, Wash.	1934	1934-49; 1950-68
Fort Leavenworth, Leavenworth, Kan.	1827	1875-present
Fort Lee, Hopewell/Petersburg, Va.	1917	1948-present
Fort Leonard Wood, Waynesville, Mo.	1940	1950-present
Fort Lewis, Brooklyn/Long Island, N.Y. (see Fort Hamilton)		
Fort Lewis, Tacoma, Wash.	1917	1920s-34?-1953-present
Fort Lincoln, Bismarck, N.D. (Old) (aka Fort Abraham Lincoln; Old Fort Abraham Lincoln)	1873	1875-93*
Fort Lincoln, Bismarck, N.D. (New) (aka Fort Abraham Lincoln; New Fort Abraham Lincoln)	1896-99	1934-?
Fort Logan, Denver, Colo.	1887	1934
Fort Logan, Meagher County, Mont. (aka Camp Baker)	1869	1869-80*
Fort Lowell, Tucson, Ariz.	1862	1867-91*
Fort Lyon #1 (aka Fort Wise), Bent County, Colo.	1860-67	1867*
Fort Lyon #2, Bent County, Colo. (new site, 20 miles north of Fort Wise)	1867	1867-89*, 1906-22*
Fort MacArthur, San Pedro, Calif.	1934	1934-75
Fort Macon, Beaufort, N.C.	1834	1867-1877*; 1898-1903*
Fort Maginnis, Fergus County, Mont.	1880-81	1880-81*
Fort Marion, St. John's County, Fla. (Castillo de San Marcos)	1821, 1835-43	1874-75, 1886-87 1874-75, 1886-87
Fort Mason, Mason, Texas	1851-61, 1866-68	1867-68*
Fort Mason, San Francisco, Calif.	1908	1908*
Fort McClellan, Anniston, Ala.	1917	1934-49; 1951-2000
Fort McCoy, Sparta, Wis.	1909	1934-49; 1951-53; 1965-present
Fort McDowell, Maricopa County, Ariz.	1865	1867-91*
Fort McDowell, Angel Island, Calif.	1934	1934-1947?
Fort McDermit, Humboldt County, Nev.	1865	1867-1889*
Fort McHenry, Baltimore, Md. (originally, Fort W'betstone)	1776	1867-1914*; 1917-23*
Fort McIntosh, Laredo, Webb County, Texas	1849	1934-46
Fort McKavett, Menard County, Texas	1852	1867-83*
Fort McKean, N.D. (see Fort Abraham Lincoln)		
Fort McKinney #1, Johnson County, Wyo. (Cantonment Reno)	1876	1876-78*

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Fort McKinney #2, on the Powder River, Wyo.	1878	1878-94*
Fort McNair, Washington, D.C. (previously known as Washington Arsenal; Fort Leslie/Lesley J. McNair)	1791	1948-95
Fort McPherson, Atlanta, Ga. (previously known as Camp Jesup)	1885	1948-49; 1950-present
Fort McRae, Sierra County, N.M.	1863	1876*
Fort Meade, Odenton, Md. (aka Fort George G. Meade)	1917	1934-present
Fort Meade, Meade County, S.D.	1878	1934-44
Fort Missoula, Missoula County, Mont.	1878	1934-47?
Fort Mohave (Mojave), Mohave County, Ariz.	1859	1867-90*
Fort Monmouth, Oceanport, N.J. (previously known as Signal Corps Camp, Little Silver; Camp Alfred Vail)	1917	1934-present
Fort Monroe, Old Point Comfort, Va. (previously known as Fortress Monroe)	1818	1922-2003
Fort Morgan, Gulf Shores, Ala.	1834	? – 1945?
Fort Moultrie, Sullivan's Island, S.C.	1934	1934-1947?
Fort Myer, Rosslyn, Va. (previously known as Fort Whipple)	1863	1934-present
Fort Niagara, Youngstown, N.Y.	1815	1934-?; ?-1963
Fort Oglethorpe, Savannah, Ga. (originally, Fort James Jackson)	1834	1867-84?
Fort Oglethorpe, Fort Oglethorpe, Ga.	1904	?-1934-47
Fort Omaha, Omaha, Neb. (aka Camp Sherman; Sherman Barracks; Omaha Barracks)	1868	1934-47
Fort Ontario, Oswego, N.Y.	1796	1934-46
Fort Ord, Monterey, Calif. (also see Ord Community Commissary)	1917	1948-2000
Fort Pena, Colorado, Texas	@1866	@1867-90
Fort Phantom Hill, Jones County, Texas (no known sales commissary)	1851-54, 1867	1867
Fort Phil Kearny, Johnson County, Wyo. (aka Fort Kearny)	1866	1867-68*
Fort Pickett, Blackstone, Va.	1941	?-1949; 1950-53
Fort Point, San Francisco, Calif. (see Fort Winfield Scott)		
Fort Polk, Leesville, Vernon Parish, La.	1941	1950-present
Fort Quitman, Hudspeth County, Texas	1866	1867-90*
Fort Randall, Gregory County, S.D.	1856	1867-92*
Fort Ransom, Fort Ransom, N.D.	1867	1867*
Fort Reno, Canadian County, Okla. (aka Reno QM Depot)	1874	1934-47?; post closed 1949
Fort Reno (Fort Connor), Johnson County, Wyo.	1865	1867-68*
Fort Rice, Morton County, N.D.	1864	1867-78*
Fort Richardson (old), Anchorage, Alaska (see Elmendorf AFB)		
Fort Richardson (new), Anchorage, Alaska	1950	1954-99
Fort Richardson, Jacksboro, Jack County, Texas	1867	1867-78*
Fort Ridgely, Nicollet County, Minn.	1853-67	1867*
Fort Riley, Junction City, Kan.	1853	1892-present
Fort Ringgold (Ringgold Barracks), Texas	1934	1934-47?
Fort Ritchie, Cascade, Md.	1926	1960-98
Fort Robinson, Dawes & Sioux Counties, Neb.	1874	1934-49
Fort Rodman, New Bedford, Mass. (aka Fort Taber)	1934	1934-47?
Fort Ruby, White Pine County, Nev.	1862	1867-69
Fort Rucker, Daleville, Ala.	1942	1950-present
Fort Ruger, Honolulu, Hawaii	1934	1947?
Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas	1876	1932-present
Fort San Carols De Barrancas, Fla. (see Fort Barrancas)		
Fort Sanders, Laramie, Wyo.	1866	1867-82*

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Fort Schuler, Bronx, N.Y.	1934	1934-47?
Fort Scott, Bourbon County, Kan.	1842-55/1862-65/ 1870-73	1870-73*
Fort Screven, Tybee Island, Ga.	1855	1934-47?
Fort Sedgwick, Sedgwick County, Colo.	1864	1867-71*
Fort Selden, Dona Ana County, N.M.	1865	1867-79*, 1881-92*
Fort Seward, Haines, Alaska (<i>see Chilkoot Barracks</i>)		
Fort Shafter, Honolulu, Hawaii (<i>Kahauiki Military Reservation</i>)	1899	1934-2002
Fort Shaw, Cascade County, Mont.	1867*	1867-91*
Fort Sheridan, Highwood, Ill.	1887	1934-94
Fort Sidney, Sidney, Neb.	1867	1880s*
Fort Sill, Lawton, Comanche County, Okla.	1869/70	1869/70-1934-present
Fort Sisseton, Marshall County, S.D. (<i>aka Fort Wadsworth, 1864-1876</i>)	1864	1867-89*
Fort Slocum, New Rochelle, N.Y.	1948	1948-49; 1951-65
Fort Smith, Sebastian County, Ark.	1817-24, 1827, 1867-71	1867-71
Fort Smith, Custer County, Mont. (<i>see Fort C.F. Smith</i>)		
Fort Snelling, Hennepin County, Minn. (<i>aka Fort Saint Anthony</i>)	1819-57, 1861	1867*-1946 (confirmed) 1934-46
Fort Spokane, Spokane, Wash.	1880	1880-99*
Fort Stanton, Lincoln County, N.M.	1855	1867-96*
Fort Steilacoom, Pierce County, Wash.	1849	1867-68*
Fort Stevens, Hammond, Ore.	1934	1934-47?
Fort Stevenson, Garrison, N.D.	1867	1867-83*
Fort Stewart, Hinesville, Ga.	1940	1949; 1950-present
Fort Stockton, Pecos County, Texas	1858-61, 1867-86	1867-86*
Fort Story, Virginia Beach, Va.	1948	1948-95
Fort Sumner, DeBaca County, N.M.	1862	1867-68*
Fort Sully, S.D. (<i>second post by this name in South Dakota</i>)	1866	1867-94*
Fort Supply, Woodward County, Okla.	1868	1868-1903*
Fort Thomas, Campbell County, Ky.	1934	1934-47?
Fort Totten, Bayside/Flushing, Long Island, N.Y.	1860s	1934-67
Fort Totten, Benson County, N.D.	1867	1867-90
Fort Union, Watrous (<i>Mora County</i>), N.M.	1851	1867-91
Fort Vancouver, Vancouver, Wash. (<i>see Vancouver Barracks</i>)		
Fort Wadsworth, Staten Island, N.Y.; later, NS Staten Island	1663	1900?/1934-72
Fort Wadsworth, Marshall County, S.D. (<i>see Fort Sisseton</i>)		
Fort Wainwright, Fairbanks, Alaska (<i>also known as Fort Jonathan Wainwright and Ladd AFB</i>)	1939	1960-present
Fort Walla Walla, Walla Walla County, Walla Walla, Wash.	1856	1867-1911*
Fort Wallace, Wallace County, Kan.	1865	1867-82*
Fort Washakie, Fremont County, Wyo.	1869	1861-1909*
Fort Washington, Prince George's County, Md.	pre-1814	1934-47?
Fort Wayne, Detroit, Mich.	-1934	1934-47?
Fort Wetherill, Jamestown, R.I.	pre-1935	
Fort Whipple, Arlington, Va. (<i>see Fort Myer</i>)		
Fort Whipple, Yuvapai County, Ariz. (<i>aka Whipple Barracks</i>)	1863-98, 1902-22	1867-1922*
Fort William H. Seward, Haines, Alaska (<i>see Chilkoot Barracks</i>)		
Fort William Henry Harrison, Helena, Mont.	pre-1935	pre-1935*

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Fort Williams, Cape Cottage, Maine	-1934	1934-49
Fort Wilson, Washington (See Fort Worden)		
Fort Winfield Scott, Golden Gate San Francisco, Calif. (previously Fort Point)	1865	1882-1914*, 1917*-34-47
Fort Wingate, El Gallo County, N.M. (then changed locations, El Gallo to McKinley Co., 65 miles to northwest):	1860-68 1868-1910 1918-25	1867-68* 1868-1910* 1918-25
Fort Wise, Bent County, Colo. (see Fort Lyon #1)		
Fort Wolters, Texas (also see Wolters AFB; aka Mineral Wells AFB)	1941	1955-1973
Fort Worden, Port Townsend, Wash. (aka Fort Wilson)	1898	1934-53
Fort Worth AAF, Texas (see Carswell AFB)		
Fort Wright, Spokane, Wash. (see Fort George Wright)		
Fort Wright, Fishers Island, N.Y. (see Fort H.G. Wright)		
Fort Yates, Sioux County, N.D.	1873-1903	1873*-1903
Fort Yuma, Imperial County, Calif.	1850	1867-85*
Fortuna AFS, Fortuna, N.D.	1966	1966-81
Foster AFB, Victoria, Texas (aka Foster AAF)	1955	1955-58
Francis E. Warren AFB, Laramie County, Cheyenne, Wyo. (aka F. E. Warren AFB; previously, Fort Francis E. Warren; Fort D. A. Russell)	1867	1934-present
Front Royal QM Depot, Front Royal, Va.	-1934	1934-47?
Galena Field, Spokane, Wash. (see Fairchild AFB; AKA Spokane Army Air Depot)		
Gary AFB, San Marcos, Texas (aka Camp Gary; see San Marcos AFB)		
Geiger AFS, Spokane, Wash. (later, Spokane LAP; previously Geiger Field)	1958	1960?-63?
George AFB, Victorville, Calif. (previously Victorville AFB)	1941	1948-92
Gila Bend Air Force Auxiliary Field, Ariz.	1940s	1958-94
Glasgow AFB, Glasgow, Mont.	1959	1959-68
NAS Glynco, Glynco, Ga.	1961	1961-71
Goodfellow AFB, San Angelo, Texas	1941	1948-49; ?-present
Governors Island Coast Guard Station, N.Y. (aka Fort Jay)	1810	1934-96
Grand Forks AFB, Grand Forks, N.D.	1955	1959-present
Granite City Army Depot/Engineering Depot, Ill. (see C.M. Price Support Center)		
Gray's Harbor, Wash.	pre-1935	?
Great Falls AFB, Great Falls, Mont. (see Malmstrom AFB)		
NS Great Lakes, Ill. (previously Great Lakes Naval Training Center)	1911	1948-present
NAS Green Cove Springs, Fla.	-1948	1948-62
Greenville AAB, Greenville, S.C. (see Donaldson AFB; renamed 1951)		
Greenville AFB, Greenville, Miss.	1943	1953-1965*
Grenier AFB, N.H.	-1948	1848-56
Griffiss AFB, Rome, N.Y.	1942	1948-95
Grissom AFB, Kokomo/Peru, Ind. (previously Bunker Hill AFB; Bunker Hill NS)	1942	1958-94
Groton, Conn. (see New London)		
NCBC Gulfport, Gulfport, Miss.	1942	1969-present
Gunter AFB, Montgomery, Ala.	-1948	1948-present
Hadnot Point, Camp Lejeune, N.C.	1941	1948-93
Haines Mission, Alaska (see Chilkoot Barracks)		
Hamilton Housing, Novato/San Rafael, Calif. (aka Hamilton AFB & NS Hamilton)	pre-1948	1948-97
Hammer Field, Fresno, Calif.	1941	?-1941-?
NB Hampton Roads, Hampton Roads, Va.	1919	?-1949-?

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Hancock AFB, Syracuse, N.Y.	-1960	1960-84
Hanscom AFB, Bedford, Mass.	1942	1956-present
Harlingen AFB, Harlingen, Texas	-1956	1956-62
Harrison Village, Indianapolis, Ind. (<i>aka Fort Benjamin Harrison</i>)	1903	1934-present
Havre AFS, Havre, Mont.	-1964	1964-93
Hawkins AFB, Jackson, Miss.	-1948	1948-49
Hickam AFB, Oahu, Hawaii (<i>previously Fort Kamabameha</i>)	-1934	1934-present
Hill AFB, Ogden, Utah	-1940	1940-present
Hobbs AFB, MIA, N.M.	-1948	1948
Holabird QM Depot, Baltimore, Md.	-1934	1934
Holbrook AFS, Holbrook, Ariz.	?	1979-93
Holloman AFB, Alamogordo, N.M. (<i>aka Alamogordo AFB</i>)	1942	1948-present
Homestead AFB, Homestead, Fla. (<i>previously Miami AFB</i>)*	1942	1945-49; 1953-92
Hunter AAF, Savannah, Calif.	1958	1958-67; 1979-present
Huntsville Arsenal, Ala. (<i>annexed by Redstone Arsenal, 1949</i>)	1941	?-1949
Hurlburt AFB, Fort Walton Beach, Fla.	1941	1956-present
NOLF Imperial Beach, Imperial Beach/San Diego, Calif. (<i>aka Ream Field</i>)	1917	1986-present
Indian Springs AFS, Indian Springs, Nev.	1958	1958-87
NOTC Inyokern, Inyokern, Calif.	1948	1948-49
Jackson Barracks, New Orleans, La.	pre-1935	
Jacksonville Post, Jacksonville, Fla.	1864-67	1864 (office & storehouse)
NAS Jacksonville, Jacksonville, Fla.	1948	1948-present
James Connally AFB, Waco, Texas (<i>see Connally AFB</i>)		
Jefferson Barracks, St. Louis County, Mo.	1826	1867-1946*
Jeffersonville QM Depot, Jeffersonville, Ky.	1934	1934-47?
Kalispell AFS, Kalispell, Mont.	1934	1964-78
MCAS Kaneohe Bay, Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii	1939	1956-present
Kansas City Records Center, Kansas City, Mo.	1948	1948-49
Kearney AFB/AAF, Kearney, Neb.	1943	?-1948-49
Keesler AFB, Biloxi, Miss.	1941	1941-present
Kelly AFB, San Antonio, Texas (<i>includes old Duncan Field</i>)	1917	1934-2001
NAS/NS Key West, Key West, Fla.	1917	1948-present
Kincheloe AFB, Kinross, Mich. (<i>previously known as Kinross AFS</i>)	1953	-1958-78
NSB King's Bay, St. Mary's, Ga.	1978	1985-present
Kingsley Field, Klamath Falls, Ore.	1959	1959-79
NAS Kingsville, Kingsville, Texas	1942	1959-present
Kirtland AFB, Albuquerque, N.M.	1939	1949; 1956-present
K. I. Sawyer AFB, Gwinn, Mich.	1948	1948-95t
NS Kitsap-Bangor, Bangor, Wash. (<i>formerly NSB Bangor; also Bangor Ammunition Depot</i>)	1942	1983-present

* — **Homestead** was temporarily closed from 1945 to 1955, following major hurricane damage. A temporary base was established at the Dade County Airport, which was renamed Homestead-Dade County Airport. Homestead was reopened in the 1950s, but it was again closed when Hurricane Andrew demolished it in 1992, forty-seven years after the previous hurricane. The commissary itself survived in better shape than most of the buildings on the base, but it still sustained heavy damage, including major damage to the roof. The building was unusable, but its walls were still standing, most of the roof was intact, and much of the product inside was salvaged. When Homestead was turned into an Air Guard base in 1995-96, AAFES finished repairing the old store and set up a BX mart. By 2007, plans were made for AAFES to keep the old Homestead store as an exchange, while DeCA would build a commissary for U.S. Southern Command in Miami.

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NS Kitsap-Bremerton, Bremerton, Wash. (formerly NS Bremerton; aka NSY Puget-Sound; NS Puget-Sound)	1891	1962 - present
Klamath AFS, Crescent City, Calif.	1958	1958-81
CGS Kodiak, Kodiak, Alaska (previously NS Kodiak)	1960	1960-present
Kure Beach AFS, Kure Beach, N.C. (see Fort Fisher AFS)		
Lackland AFB, San Antonio, Texas	1942	1948-present
Ladd AFB, Fairbanks, Alaska (see Fort Wainwright)		
LaJunta AFS, LaJunta, Colo.	1989	1989-96
Lake Charles AS/AFB, Lake Charles, La. (became Chennault AFB)	1956	1956-58
NAES Lakehurst, Lakehurst, N.J.	1917	1948-present
Langley AFB, Hampton, Va.	1917	1934-present
Laredo AFB, Laredo, Texas	1956	1956-75
Larson AFB, Moses Lake, Wash. (previously Moses Lake AFB)	1948	1948-66
Las Vegas AFB, Las Vegas, Nev. (see Nellis AFB)		
Las Vegas Army Gunnery School, Las Vegas, Nev. (see Nellis AFB)		
Laughlin AFB, Del Rio, Texas	1942	1966-present
NAS Lemoore, Lemoore, Calif.	1961	1966-present
Letterman General Hospital, Presidio of San Francisco, Calif.	1934	1934
Lewistown AFS, Lewistown, Mont.	1964	1964
Lexington-Bluegrass AD, Lexington, Ky. (previously Bluegrass Army Depot and Lexington Signal Depot)	1942	1948-94
Lexington Signal Depot, Ky. (see Lexington-Bluegrass Army Depot)		
Limestone AFB, Limestone, Maine (see Loring AFB)		
Lincoln AFB, Lincoln, Neb.	1956	1956-66
Litchfield Park AFB, Phoenix, Ariz. (see Luke AFB)		
NAB Little Creek, Virginia Beach, Va.	1948	1948-present
Little Rock AFB, Jacksonville, Ark.	1955	1966-present
Lockbourne AFB, Columbus, Ohio (see Rickenbacker AFB)		
NS Long Beach, Long Beach, Calif.	1959	1959-97
Loring AFB, Limestone, Maine (previously Limestone AFB)	1950	1956-94
Los Angeles AFB, Los Angeles, Calif.	1964	1983-present
Lowry AFB, Denver, Colo.	1937	1939-94
NAD Lualualei, Hawaii (previously, aka NAD Oahu NAD)	1960	1960-87
Luke AFB, Phoenix, Arizona (aka Litchfield Park AB)	1941	1951-present
Luke Field, Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii (see NAS Ford Island)		
Luke-Williams Range, Aja, Ariz.	1964	1964-66
MacDill AFB, Tampa, Fla.	1939	1948-present
Madison Barracks, Sacket's Harbor, N.Y.	1816	1934
Makah AFS, Neah Bay, Wash.	1964	1964-88
Mallonee Village, Fort Bragg, Fayetteville, N.C. (aka Fort Bragg Commissary Annex #3)	1944	1970-2000
Malmstrom AFB, Great Falls, Mont. (previously Great Falls AFB)	1942	1948-present
March ARB, Riverside, Calif. (previously March AFB; March Field; Alessandro Aviation Field)	1918	1934-present
NS Mare Island, Vallejo, Calif. (previously, NSY Vallejo Island)	1854	1948-95
Matagorda Island, Matagorda Island, Texas (USAF installation)	1972	1972-75
Mather AFB, Rancho Cordova, Calif.	1918	1948-49; 1966-93
Maxwell AFB, Montgomery, Ala.	1918	1934-present
NS Mayport, Atlantic Beach, Fla.	1942	1966-present

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McCain Field, Meridian, Miss. (<i>see NAS Meridian</i>)		
McChord AFB, Tacoma, Wash.	1938	1948-present
McClellan, Sacramento, Calif. (<i>previously McClellan AFB</i>)	1936	1948-present
McConnell AFB, Wichita, Kan. (<i>previously Wichita AFB</i>)	1942	1956-present
McCormick Hospital, Pasadena, Calif.	-1948	1948-1949
McCoy AFB, Orlando, Fla. (<i>see Orlando NTC</i>)		
McGuire AFB, Wrightstown, N.J.	1937	1948-49; ?-present
Memphis Defense Depot, Memphis, Tenn. (<i>aka Memphis General Depot</i>)	1942	1948-49
NA/NSA Memphis, Millington, Tenn.	1942	1948-present
NAS Meridian, Meridian, Miss. (<i>previously, McCain Field</i>)	1961	1966-present
Miami AFB, Homestead, Fla. (<i>see Homestead AFB</i>)		
Midway Island Housing Area, Quantico MCB, Va. (<i>also see Midway Island, overseas</i>)	1917	1969-?
Midway Park, Camp Lejeune, N.C.	1941	@1949-?
Mile 26, North Pole, Alaska (<i>see Eielson AFB</i>)		
Miller Field, Staten Island, N.Y.	1919	1934
Mineral Wells AFB, Texas (<i>see Fort Wolters; aka as Wolters AFB</i>)		
Minot AFB, Minot, N.D.	1954	1956-present
MCAS Miramar, San Diego, Calif.	1959	1959-present
Mitchel Field, Hempstead/Garden City, N.Y.	-1934	1934-present
Mobile ATC, Mobile, Ala. (<i>Coast Guard grocery annex</i>)	-1983	1983
NAS Moffett Field, Mountain View, Calif. (<i>previously NAS Sunnyvale</i>)	1933	1948-present
Montauk AFS, Montauk Point, Suffolk County, N.Y.	1966	1966-80
Moody AFB, Valdosta, Ga.	1942	1966-present
Moses Lake AFB, Moses Lake, Washington (<i>see Larson AFB</i>)		
Mount Hebo AF Radio Station, Hebo, Ore.	1958	1966-80
Mount Laguna AFS, Mount Laguna, Calif.	1966	1966-81
Mountain Home AFB, Mountain Home, Idaho	1943	1956-present
Muroc AFB, Muroc, Calif. (<i>see Edwards AFB</i>)		
Myrtle Beach AFB, Myrtle Beach, S.C.	1942	1942-93
NF Nantucket, Nantucket, Mass.	1966	1966-?
Navajo Army Depot, Bellemont, Ariz. (<i>aka Navajo Ordnance Depot</i>)	1948	1948-64
Nekoma Army Base, Nekoma, N.D.	1974	1974-?
Nellis AFB, Las Vegas, Nev. (<i>previously Las Vegas AFB, Las Vegas Army Gunnery School</i>)	1941	1956-present
New Almaden AFS, San Jose, Calif. (<i>see Almaden AFS</i>)		
New Cumberland AD, New Cumberland, Pa. (<i>aka DDC; Defense Distribution Center; DDRE; Defense Distribution Region East</i>)	1948	1948-2002
NAAS New Iberia, New Iberia, La.	1964	1964
NSB New London, Groton, Conn.	1915	1948-present
NS New Orleans, La. (<i>previously Callender Field</i>)	-1948	1948-present
NB Newport, Newport, R.I.	?	1923-present
MCAS New River, Jacksonville, N.C.	1955	1963-present
New York General Depot, Brooklyn, N.Y.	-1934	1934
Niagara Falls Municipal Airport, Niagara Falls, N.Y. (<i>aka Niagara Falls AFB</i>)	1957	1957-70
NS Norfolk, Norfolk, Va. (<i>aka Norfolk Naval Base</i>)	1917	1948-present
NSY Norfolk, Portsmouth, Va. (<i>see Portsmouth NNSY</i>)		
Normoyle QM Depot, San Antonio, Texas	1917	1934-43
North Bend AFS, Coos, Ore.	1966	1966-80

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u>	<u>BASE ESTABLISHED</u>	<u>COMSY OPERATION</u> <i>* indicates unconfirmed</i>
NAS North Island, San Diego, Calif. (<i>also see Rockwell Field</i>)	1917	1960-present
North Truro AFS, North Truro, Mass.	1966	1966-85
Norton AFB, San Bernardino, Calif. (<i>previously, San Bernardino AFB</i>)	1941	1948-49; ?-1956-94
NAD Oahu, Hawaii (<i>aka Lualualei, after 1981</i>)	1966?	1966-81?
Oak Harbor, Wash. (<i>see NAS Whidbey Island</i>)		
Oakland Army Base, Oakland, Calif.	1941	1948-99
NAS Oceana, Virginia Beach, Va.	1940	1955-present
Offutt AFB, Bellevue, Neb. (<i>previously Fort Crook, Fort George Crook</i>)	1891	1934-present
Oliver General Hospital, Augusta, Ga.	-1948	1948-49
Olmstead AFB, Olmstead, Pa.	-1948	1948-49; ?-1958
Onizuka AFB, Sunnyvale, Calif. (<i>previously Sunnyvale AS</i>)	1960	1960
Opheim AFS, Opheim, Mont.	1970	1970-81
Ord Community Commissary, Monterey, Calif. (<i>also see Presidio of Monterey & Fort Ord</i>)	2000	2000-present
NTC Orlando, Orlando, Fla. (<i>previously, McCoy AFB; Orlando AFB</i>)	1940	1948-98
Osceola AFB, Osceola, Wis.	1970	1970-76
Oscada AAFfield (<i>see Wurtsmith AFB</i>)		
Othello AFS, Tacoma, Wash.	1964	1964-76
Otis AFB, Falmouth, Mass.	1948	1948-75
Oxnard AFB, Victorville, Calif.	1959	1959-66
Paine AFB, Everett, Wash.	1956	1956-66
Palm Beach AFS, Palm Beach, Fla.	1958	1958-59
Parks AFB, Dublin, Calif.	1951	1955-58
MCRD Parris Island, Parris Island, S.C.	-1948	1948-present
Patrick AFB, Cocoa Beach/Satellite Beach, Brevard County, Fla. (<i>previously NAS Banana River</i>)	1940	1956-present
NAS Patuxent River, St. Mary's County, Md.	-1948	1948-present
NB Pearl Harbor, Oahu, Hawaii	1908	1950-present
Pease AFB, Portsmouth, New Hampshire (<i>aka Portsmouth AFB</i>)	1956	1958-91
NAS Pensacola, Pensacola, Fla.	1825	1945-present
Percy Jones General Hospital, Battle Creek, Mich. (<i>see Custer AFS</i>)		
Perrin AFB, Sherman, Texas	-1948	1948-71
Peterson AFB, Colorado Spings, Colo.	1941	1948-present
Philadelphia QM Depot, Philadelphia, Pa. (<i>aka Schuylkill Arsenal</i>)	1800	1934-?
NB Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pa.	1801	1948-49; ?-1995
Picatinny Arsenal, Picatinny, N.J. (<i>aka ARDEC; Armament Research, Development, and Engineering Center</i>)	1879	1979-present
Pickstown AFS, Pickstown, S.D.	1966	1966
Pine Bluff Arsenal, Pine Bluff, Ark.	1942-43	?
Plattsburgh AFB, Plattsburgh, N.Y.	1838	1934-95
Point Arena AFS, Victorville, Calif.	1964	1964-80
Point Mugu, NB Ventura County, Calif. (<i>aka Point Mugu NAS</i>)	1946	1960-2002
Pope AFB, Fayetteville, N.C. (<i>aka Fort Bragg Commissary Annex #4</i>)	1919	1968-2001
Port Austin AFS, Port Austin, Mich.	1964	1988

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u>	<u>BASE ESTABLISHED</u>	<u>COMSY OPERATION</u> <i>* indicates unconfirmed</i>
Port Hueneme, NB Ventura County, Calif. (<i>previously, NCBC Port Hueneme</i>)	-1946	1946-present
Portland International Airport, Portland, Ore.	1955	1955-65
Port of Whittier, Whittier, Alaska	1954	1954
NSY Portsmouth, Maine/New Hampshire	1948	1948-49; 1995-present
NNSY Portsmouth (NSY Norfolk), Scott Annex, Portsmouth, Va.	1948	1948-49; ?-present
Powell AFS/STRC, Powell, Wyo.	1985	1985-95
Presidio of Monterey, Monterey, Calif. (<i>also see Fort Ord & Ord Community Commissary</i>)	1846	1934-2000
Presidio of San Fransico, San Fransico, Calif.	1846	1934-2002
Presque Isle AFB, Presque Isle, Maine	1941	1948-61
Provincetown, Mass. (<i>Navy store</i>)	1917	1919-?
NSY Puget Sound, Bremerton, Wash. (<i>see NS Kitsap-Bremerton; aka NS Bremerton</i>)		
NS Puget Sound, Bremerton, Wash. (<i>see NS Kitsap-Bremerton; aka NS Bremerton, NSY Bremerton, NSY Puget Sound</i>)		
Pyote AFB, Pyote, Texas	1942	1948
NAS Quonset Point, East Greenwich, R.I.	1940?	1948-74
MCB/MCCDC Quantico, Quantico, Va. (<i>also see Midway Island Housing Area</i>)	1917	1948-present
Randolph AFB, San Antonio, Texas	1930	1948-present
Rapid City AFB, Rapid City, S.D. (<i>see Ellsworth AFB</i>)		
Raritan Arsenal, Edison, N.J.	?-1934-?	?-1934-?
Red Bluff AFS, Victorville, Calif.	1964	1964-70
Red River Arsenal, Texarkana, Texas/Ark.	1941	1948-54
Redstone Arsenal, Huntsville, Ala. (<i>annexed Huntsville Arsenal, 1949</i>)	1941?	1951-present
Reese AFB, Lubbock, Texas (<i>previously Lubbock AAF</i>)	1941	1956-97
Reno QM Depot (<i>see Fort Reno, Okla.</i>)		
Richards-Gebaur AFB, Grandview/Belton, Mo.	1941	1958-78
Rickenbacker AFB, Columbus, Ohio (<i>previously Lockbourne AFB</i>)	1942	1948-72
Robins AFB, Warner Robins, Ga.	1941	1948-present
Rock Island Arsenal, Rock Island, Ill. (<i>previously Rock Island Ordnance Center; Fort Armstrong</i>)	1816	1934-present
Rockwell Field, San Diego, Calif. (<i>annexed by NAS North Island, 1935-38</i>)	1912	1934
Roswell AFB, Roswell, N.M. (<i>see Walker AFB</i>)		
Rough & Ready Island, Stockton, Calif. (<i>see Stockton NCS</i>)		
Sampson AFB, Seneca, N.Y. (<i>see Seneca Army Depot</i>)		
San Bernardino AFB, San Bernardino, Calif. (<i>see Norton AFB</i>)		
Sandia Base, Albuquerque, N.M.	1953	1953-62
MCRD San Diego, San Diego, Calif.	1916	1948
NAS San Diego, San Diego, Calif.	1961?	1961
NB San Diego, San Diego, Calif. (<i>aka 32nd St Naval Station</i>)	1921-22	1927-present
NTC San Diego, San Diego, Calif.	1923	1927-98
NS Sand Point, Wash. (<i>see NS Seattle</i>)		
NS San Francisco, San Francisco, Calif. (<i>see Skaggs Island</i>)		
NSY San Francisco, San Francisco, Calif.	1916	1948-49/1956-64
NRS San Fransico Bay, San Francisco, Calif. (<i>see Treasure Island</i>)		
San Marcos AFB, San Marcos, Texas (<i>aka Camp Gary</i>)	1942	1948-56
San Onofre, MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif.	1942	1977-present
NAS Santa Ana, Santa Ana, Calif. (<i>MCS Tustin</i>)	1942	1948-49

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u>	<u>BASE ESTABLISHED</u>	<u>COMSY OPERATION</u> * indicates unconfirmed,
Saratoga AFS, Saratoga Springs, N.Y.	1970?	1970-77
Saulte Ste. Marie, Minn. (<i>see Fort Brady</i>)		
Savanna Ordnance Depot, Ill.	-1934	1934
Schenectady Depot, Schenectady, N.Y. (<i>aka Schenectady General Depot</i>)	-1948	1948-49, 1950-66, 1972
Schilling AFB, Salina, Kan. (<i>previously Smokey Hill AFB; aka Schilling Manor; Schilling Manor Army Area</i>)	1957	1957-66, 1968-70
Schofield Barracks, Oahu, Hawaii	1908	1934-present
NSU Scotia, Scotia, N.Y.	1942	1979-present
Scott AFB, Bellville, Ill.	1917	1934-present
NS Seattle, Seattle, Wash. (<i>aka NS Sand Point; NAS Seattle</i>)	1939	1968-95
Seattle QM Depot, Seattle, Wash.	-1916	?
Sedalia AAF, Sedalia/Knob Noster, Mo. (<i>see Whiteman AFB</i>)		
Selfridge AFB, Mich.	-1934	1934-present
Seneca AD, Seneca, N.Y. (<i>aka Sampson AFB</i>)	1941	1966-93
Sewart AFB, Smyrna, Tenn. (<i>aka Smyrna AAF; Smyrna AFB</i>)	1941-42?	1956-70
Seymour Johnson AFB, Goldsboro, N.C.	1942	1958-
Sharp General Depot, Ogden, Utah	1948?	1948
Sharpe Army Depot/General Depot, Lathrop, Calif. (<i>previously Stockton General Depot</i>)	1946	1948-1949
Shaw AFB, Sumter, S.C.	1941	1948-present
Sheppard AFB, Wichita Falls, Texas (<i>previously Wichita Falls AAF</i>)	1941	1948-present
Sherman AFB, Okla. (<i>aka Clinton Sherman AFB</i>)	1958?	1958-70
Sierra Army Depot, Herlong, Calif.	1942	1972-2001
Sioux City AFB, Sioux City, Iowa	1959?	1959-67
NSGA Skaggs Island, Vallejo, Calif. (<i>aka San Francisco Naval Radio Station</i>)	1941	1965-93
NSC Smokey Point, Everett, Wash. (<i>aka NA Smokey Point</i>)	1995	1995-present
Smoky Hill AFB, Salina, Kan. (<i>became Schilling AFB in 1957; for information after 1956, see Schilling AFB</i>)	1943	1948-49; 1953-56
Southwest Harbor USCGS, Maine	?	1943?
Spokane AFB, Spokane Wash. (<i>see Fairchild AFB</i>)		
Spokane International Airport, Spokane, Wash. (<i>USAF base, Sunset Field; Geiger Field</i>)	1941	?-1963
Springfield Armory, Springfield, Mass.	-1934	1934
NS Staten Island, Staten Island, N.Y. (<i>aka NS New York</i>)	1663	1972-94
Stead AFB, Reno, Nev.	-1952	1966
Sterling Housing Area, Camp Pendleton, Calif.	1942	1969-74
Stewart AFB, Newburgh, N.Y.	@1942-43	1948-49
NCS Stockton, Calif. (<i>aka Rough & Ready Island</i>)	1927	1948-98
St. Albans AFS, St. Albans, Vt.	pre-1976	1976-81
St. Louis Administrative/National Personnel Records Center, St. Louis, Mo.	1948?	1948-49
St. Petersburg CGS, St. Petersburg, Fla.	1934	?
Suffolk County AFB, Westhampton Beach, N.Y.	-1958	1958
NSGA Sugar Grove, Sugar Grove, West Va.	1960	2001-present
Sundance AFS, Warren Peak, Wyo.	1966?	1966
NAS Sunnyvale (<i>see Moffett Field</i>)		

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u>	<u>BASE ESTABLISHED</u>	<u>COMSY OPERATION</u> <i>* indicates unconfirmed</i>
Tarawa Terrace Housing Area, Camp Lejeune, N.C.	1941	1948-52?; 1970-93
Tarrant Field, Fort Worth, Texas (<i>see Carswell AFB</i>)		
Tinker AFB, Oklahoma City, Okla.	1941	1948-present
Tobyhanna Army Depot, Tobyhanna, Pa.	1918	1966-present
NS Tongue Point, Astoria, Wash.	1939	1948
Tonopah AFS, Tonopah, Nev. (<i>later Tonopah Test Range</i>)	1957	1966
Toole Army Depot, Toole City, Utah (<i>annexed Deseret Chemical Depot, 1955</i>)	1942	1955-56
Topeka AFB, Topeka, Kan. (<i>see Forbes AFB</i>)		
Travis AFB, Fairfield, Calif. (<i>previously Fairfield-Suisun AFB</i>)	1942	1948-present
Treasure Island NS, San Francisco, Calif.	1942	1956-97
Tripler General Hospital, Honolulu, Hawaii (<i>hospital for Fort Shafter</i>)	1944	1935?
Truax Field, Madison, Wis.	1966?	1966-68
Turner AFB, Albany, Ga.	1948?	1948-66
Twentynine Palms MCB, Twentynine Palms, Calif.	1953	1956-present
Two Rock Ranch Station, Petaluma, Calif.	1942	1964-71?
Tye Field, Abilene, Texas (<i>see Dyess AFB</i>)		
Tyndall AFB, Panama City, Fla.	1941	1948-present
United States Disciplinary Barracks, Milwaukee, Wis.	1945	1948-49
United States Military Academy, West Point, N.Y. (<i>see West Point</i>)		
United States Naval Academy, Md. (<i>not to be confused with Naval Station Annapolis</i>)	1845	1949?
Utah General Depot, Ogden, Utah (<i>see Defense Depot Ogden</i>)		
NSY Vallejo, Vallejo, Calif. (<i>see Mare Island</i>)		
Valley Forge General Hospital, Phoenixville, Pa.	1943	1948-49; 1950-72
Vance AFB, Enid, Okla. (<i>previously Enid AFB</i>)	1941	1948-present
Vancouver Barracks, Clark County, Wash. (<i>previously, Camp Vancouver; Fort Vancouver; Columbia Barracks</i>)	1849	1934-47
Vandenberg AFB, Lompoc, Calif. (<i>previously Cooke AFB</i>)	1942	1958-present
NB Ventura County, Calif. (<i>see Point Mugu and Port Hueneme</i>)		
Victorville AFB, Victorville, Calif. (<i>see George AFB</i>)		
Vincent AFB, Yuma, Arizona (<i>see MCAS Yuma</i>)		
Vint Hill Farms Station, Warrenton, Va.	1952	1952-97
Waco AFB, Texas (<i>see Connally AFB; previously Waco Army Airfield</i>)		
Walker AFB, Roswell, N.M. (<i>previously Roswell AFB</i>)	1941	1948-53
Walter Reed AMC, Washington, D.C. (<i>includes old store on hospital grounds and modern store on Forest Glen annex</i>)	1909	1934-present
Warrior Way commissary, Texas (<i>see Fort Hood</i>)		
NY Washington, Washington, D.C.	1799	1910-?
Washington General Depot, Alexandria, Va. (<i>see Cameron Station</i>)		
Watertown AFS, Watertown, N.Y.	pre-1976	pre-1976-79
Webb AFB, Big Spring, Texas	1951	1956-77
NAF Weeksville, Weeksville, N.C.	1941-42	1956
Wendover AFB, Wendover, Utah	1941	1948
Western Chemical Center, Toole, Utah	1942?	1948-49
Westover AFB, Chickopee Falls, Mass.	1940	1948-77
West Point, N.Y. (<i>aka U.S. Military Academy</i>)	1778	1934-present
NAS Whidbey Island, Oak Harbor, Wash. (<i>aka NAS Oak Harbor</i>)	1941-42	1948-present

<u>NAME, LOCATION</u>	<u>BASE ESTABLISHED</u>	<u>COMSY OPERATION</u> * indicates unconfirmed
Whiteman AFB, Sedalia/Knob Noster, Mo. (previously, Sedalia Army Air Field)	1942	1948-present
White Sands Missile Range, Las Cruces, N.M. (aka White Sands Proving Ground)	1945	1953-present
NAS Whiting Field, Milton, Fla.	1943	1948-present
Wichita Falls AAF, Texas, (see Shappard AFB)		
Wilder AFS, Wilder, Idaho	1975	1979-94
Wildwood Station, Alaska (aka Wildwood AFS)	1959	1959-72
Williams AFB, Chandler, Ariz.	1941	1948-93
NAS Willow Grove, Willow Grove, Pa.	1943	1987-?
NSGA Winter Harbor, Gouldsboro, Mass.	1953	1972-2002
Winston-Salem AFS, Winston-Salem, N.C.	1966	1966-present
Wolters AFB, Mineral Wells, Texas (aka Camp Wolters; Mineral Wells AFB; also see Fort Wolters)	1941	1955-73
Wright-Patterson AFB, Dayton, Ohio (also see Fairfield Air Depot)	1920	1948-93
Wurtsmith AFB, Oscoda, Mich. (aka Camp Skeel, Oscoda AAF, Oscoda AFB)	1940	1966-93
Yerba Buena Island, San Francisco, Calif.	1941	1948-1949/50
NWS Yorktown, Yorktown, Va.	1918	1948-94
MCAS Yuma, Yuma, Ariz. (previously Vincent AFB)	1959	1963-present
Yuma Proving Ground, Yuma, Ariz. (previously Yuma Test Station, Yuma Test Branch)	1943	1948-present
Yuma Quartermaster Depot, Yuma, Ariz.	1850	1967-1985

PART 2: COMMISSARIES OUTSIDE THE 50 UNITED STATES

(includes bases in U.S. territories)

NOTE: All stores listed as being "Germany" were in West Germany, May 1945 - November 1990, except those stores located in Berlin, which were actually in West Berlin. Stores listed as "Panama" were located in what was formerly called the Canal Zone. PCC stores are listed since U.S. military personnel could shop there. Stores listed as "Vietnam" were located in South Vietnam.

<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>YEARS OF COMSY OPERATION</u>
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia	1966-73
NSD Agana, Guam (aka Naval Supply Depot Guam; also see Orote for a later store)	1946-95
Akita, Honshu, Japan (commissary train stop)	1949
Akizuki, Japan	1986-87
Alconbury, UK (see RAF Alconbury)	
Allbrook AFB, Panama (Balboa Fill Landing Field)	1922; no confirmed store
Amberg, Germany (aka Pond Barracks)	1954-92
American Barracks, Peking, China (see Peking)	
American Barracks, Tientsin, China (see Tientsin)	
Ancon, Panama (PCC)	1915-51/1979?
Andersen AFB, Guam	
Marbo site	1944-55
Main Base store	1955-present
Anderson Barracks, Germany (see Dexbeim)	
Andrews Barracks, Germany (see Berlin)	
Ankara AS/American Support Facility, Ankara, Turkey	1965-94; 2000-present
Ansbach, Germany (aka Katterbach Kaserne)	1954-present

LOCATIONYEARS OF COMSY OPERATION

Antigua, West Indies (<i>Nexmart 1991-1995</i>)	? – 1980s; 1991-95
Aomori, Honshu, Japan (<i>commissary train stop</i>)	1949
NF Argentia, Newfoundland	1958-1994
Army Graves Registration, Algeria	1954
Asaka, Honshu, Japan (<i>aka Camp Drake</i>)	1949-56
Aschsaffenburg, Germany	1954-2005
Ascom City, S. Korea (<i>55th QM Depot</i>)	1956
Ashiya AB, Japan	1960
Asmara, Eritrea	1954
Athenai AS, Greece (<i>see Hellenikon AS</i>)	
Athens, Greece (<i>downtown store</i>)	1947-1995
NAF Atsugi, Atsugi, Japan	1953?-1969-present
Augsburg, Germany	1952-98
Aviano AB, Italy	1960-present
Babenhausen, Germany	1986-2006
Bacalan, France	1960-67
Bad Aibling, Germany	1960-2004
Bad Hersfeld, Germany	1954-93
Bad Kissingen, Germany	1954-2006
Bad Kreuznach, Germany	1954-2001
Bad Nauheim, Germany	1946-2007
Bad Tolz, Germany	1954-91
Baguio, Philippines (<i>aka Camp John Hay; see John Hay AFB</i>)	
Balboa, Panama (<i>PCC/TSA</i>)	1914-84
Bamberg, Germany	1952-present
Bangkok, Thailand (<i>aka JUSMAAG</i>)	1960-73
NA Barcelona, Spain	1960 - ?
Barbados (<i>Grantly International Airport</i>)	TFE, 1983-84
Batangas, Philippines	1901-?
Baumholder, Germany	1954-present
Bayreuth, Germany	1954-pre-1991?
Bel Manoir, Paris, France (<i>aka U.S. Army Post Paris; see Paris</i>)	
Benguerir AB, Morocco	1960-67
Bentwaters, UK (<i>see RAF Bentwaters</i>)	
Berchtesgaden, Germany	1960-90
Berlin, Germany:	
Andrews Barracks	1946-49
Berlin Command Shopping Center	1950-58
Truman Plaza	1958-94
NS/NAS Bermuda, Bermuda (<i>formerly Kindley AFB, 1955-1970</i>)	1970-79-95
NAS Bermuda Annex, Bermuda (<i>Nexmart</i>)	?-1993
Bermuda AFB, Bermuda (<i>see Kindley AFB</i>)	
Bindlach, Germany	1972-92
Bitburg AB, Germany (<i>local name Eifel Military Community West</i>)	1960-present
Bordeaux AB, France	1954-67
Braconne, France	1954-59
Brady Auxiliary Field, Japan (<i>became a branch of Itazuke AB, 1962</i>)	?-1962-?
NF Brawdy, UK (<i>Nexmart</i>)	1991
Bremerhaven, Germany	1946-93
Bridisi AS, Italy (<i>see San Vito de Normanni AB</i>)	

<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>YEARS OF COMSY OPERATION</u>
Brize Norton, UK (<i>see RAF Brize Norton</i>)	
Brunssum, Netherlands	1968-73?
Bruntingthorpe, UK (<i>see RAF Bruntingthorpe</i>)	
Buedingen, Germany	1988-2007
Bueren, Germany	1988-92
Burderop, UK (<i>see RAF Burderop Park</i>)	
Burtonwood, UK (<i>see RAF Burtonwood</i>)	
Bussac, France (<i>aka Landes de Bussac</i>)	1954-67
Cairo, Egypt	1983-present
Camp Butler, Okinawa (Japan) (<i>aka Suciran; Zukeran; Fort Buckner</i>) (<i>after 1989, see Camp Foster</i>)	1972-77-89
Camp Carroll, Taegu, S. Korea	1985-present
Camp Casey, Tongdu-Chon, S. Korea	1987-present
Camp Chickamauga, Beppu, Japan	1953-56
Camp Courtney, Gushikawa, Okinawa	1988-present
Camp Crawford, Japan	1953-54
Camp Darby, Italy (<i>see Livorno</i>)	
Camp Drake, Asaka, Honshu, Japan (<i>aka Asaka</i>)	1949-56
Camp Drew, Japan (<i>aka Drew</i>)	1953-54
Camp Eagle, S. Korea	2006-present
Camp Edwards, Panmunjom, S. Korea	1987-99
Camp Eldridge, Philippines	1908
Camp Foster MCB, Naha, Okinawa (Japan) (<i>aka Camp Butler; Zukeran; Sukiran; Fort Buckner</i>)	1977-present
Camp Fuji, near Mount Fuji, Japan	1953-56
Camp Hakata, near Fukuoka, Japan	1953-56
Camp Haugen, Honshu, Japan	1953
Camp Henry, S. Korea (<i>see Taegu</i>)	
Camp Howze, S. Korea	1999-2004
Camp Humphries, Pyong Taek, S. Korea	1988-2001, 2005-present
Camp John Hay, Philippines (<i>see John Hay AFB; aka Baguio</i>)	
Camp King, Germany	1988-94
MCB Camp Kinser, Naha, Okinawa (Japan)	1990-present
Camp Kobe, Japan (<i>see Kobe</i>)	
Camp Kokura, Kokura, Japan	1953-56
Camp Kure, Hiroshima, Japan (<i>commissary train stop: 1949; aka Kure</i>)	1949; 1987-present
Camp des Loges, France	1960-67
Camp Losey, Puerto Rico	1954
Camp Matsushima, Japan	1953-54
Camp Mawer, Japan	1953-54
Camp McGill, Japan	pre-1953-55
Camp Nara, Nara (<i>near Osaka</i>), Japan	1953-56
Camp New Amsterdam, Netherlands (<i>see Soesterberg AB</i>)	
Camp Otsu, Kyoto, Japan	1953-56
Camp Page, Chun Chon, S. Korea	1987-2005
Camp Red Cloud, S. Korea	2002-present
Camp Schimmelpfennig, Sendai, Japan	1953-56
Camp Sendai, Japan (<i>see Sendai</i>)	
Camp Stanley, Uijonbu, S. Korea	1987-present
Camp Stotsenberg, Pampanga, Philippines (<i>see Clark AFB</i>)	

LOCATIONYEARS OF COMSY OPERATION

Camp Wilhelm, Philippines	1910-?
Camp Whittington, Oshi, Japan	1953-56
Camp Wood, Kumamoto, Japan	1953-56
Camp Yokohama, Japan (<i>included Nasugbu Beach; also see Yokohama; Yokohama Naval Housing Area</i>)	@1946-53
Camp Young Hans, Japan (<i>see Jimmachi</i>)	
Camp Zama, Tokyo, Japan (<i>aka Sagamihara Dependent Housing Area</i>)	1958-present
NS Canal Zone, Panama (<i>see NS Rodman</i>)	
NSA Canal Zone, Panama (<i>see NS Rodman</i>)	
Can Tho, S. Vietnam	?-1973-?
Capitteau, France (<i>also spelled: Capitteux</i>)	1954-67
Capodochino, Italy (<i>Nexmart</i>)	?-2007
NAVMAG Cartagena, Cartagena, Columbia	1960
Caserne Ederle, Italy (<i>see Vicenza</i>)	
Catania, Sicily (<i>Italy, see Sigonella</i>)	
Chad (<i>see Chateauroux</i>)	
Chambley AB, Chambley, France	1960-67
Chateauroux Air Depot, France (<i>aka Chateauroux AS, known locally as Chad</i>)	1955-67
Chaumont AB, France	1960-67
Chia Yi (<i>branch of Taipei/Taiwan/Formosa</i>)	1967
NF Chi Chi Jima, Bonin Islands	1960-68-?
Chicksands, UK (<i>see RAF Chicksands</i>)	
Chievres, Belgium	?-1972-present
NAS Chinhae, South Korea	1960-present
Chinon U.S. Army Depot Activity, France	1954-67
Chitose AS, Japan	1972-73?
Cholon Compound, Saigon, S. Vietnam (<i>also see Saigon</i>)	1969
Cifu, Japan	1953-?
Cigli AB, Turkey	1965-68
Cite de Tourvent, France	1957-67
Clark AB, Philippines (<i>aka Fort Stotsenberg</i>)	1934-91
Cocoli, Panama (PCC)	1951
NAS Coco Solo, Canal Zone, Panama	1935-81
Coco Walk, Canal Zone, Panama (<i>see France Field</i>)	
Comiso AB (<i>between Vittorio and Ragusa</i>), Sicily (<i>Italy</i>)	1987-91
Contrexville, France (<i>aka Red Cross Hospital, Contrexville</i>)	1918
Corozal, Canal Zone, Panama (<i>aka Corozal Post; Corozal General Depot; Fort Corozal</i>)	1934-99
Costanzo, Sicily (<i>Italy</i>)	1994-2002
Cote d'Or, France (<i>aka Is-Sur-Tille</i>)	1919
Crailsheim, Germany	1954-93
Cranage, UK (<i>see RAF Cranage</i>)	
Crawford, Japan (<i>see Camp Crawford</i>)	
Cristobal, Canal Zone, Panama	1906-51?
Crotone, Italy	1991?
Croughton, UK (<i>see RAF Croughton</i>)	
Culebra, Panama (PCC)	1951
Curundu, Canal Zone, Panama	1952
Dachau, Germany	1972-73

<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>YEARS OF COMSY OPERATION</u>
Darien, Panama (PCC)	1951
Darmstadt, Germany	1954-present
Decimomannu, Sardinia (<i>Italy</i>)	1988-91
Degendorf, Germany	1954
Dexheim, Germany (<i>aka Anderson Barracks</i>)	1987-present
Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, (<i>Dhahran AB</i>)	1960-2000
Diablo Heights, Panama (PCC)	1951
Dreux AB, France	1960-67
East Kirkby, UK (<i>see RAF East Kirkby</i>)	
NSGA Edzell, Scotland (UK)	1964-97
Elvington, UK (<i>see RAF Elvington</i>)	
Erding AD, Germany	1960
Erlangen, Germany	1954-94
Ernest Harmon AFB, Newfoundland (<i>aka Harmon AFB</i>)	1960-65
Eselsfuerth QM Facility, Germany	1976-90
Espagne, France (<i>aka Robert Espagne</i>)	1954-67?
Etain, France (<i>aka Etain/Rouvres AB</i>)	1960-67
Eta Jima, Japan	1953-54
Everaux/Fauville, France (<i>aka Fauville</i>)	1960-67
Exmouth, Australia (<i>aka NCS Harold E. Holt</i>)	1973-92
Fairford, UK (<i>see RAF Fairford</i>)	
Fauville (<i>see Everaux/Fauville AB</i>)	
Fischbach, Germany	1988-92
Flensburg, Germany	1983-92
Fliegerhorst, Germany	1988-93
Florennes, Belgium	1984-89
Fontainebleu, France	1954-67
Fontenet, France	1954-67
NRS Fort Allen, Puerto Rico (<i>aka NRS Ponce</i>)	1963-73
Fort Amador, Panama	1934?-?
Fort Brooke, Panama	1949?-54
Fort Bruja, Panama (<i>aka Howard AFB</i>)	1934-99
Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico	1954-present
Fort Buckner, Okinawa (Japan) (<i>see Camp Butler; aka Zukeran; Sukiran; Camp Buckner; Camp Foster; Fort Butler</i>)	
Fort Butler, Okinawa (Japan) (<i>see Camp Butler; aka Zukeran; Sukiran; Fort Buckner; Camp Buckner; Camp Foster</i>)	
Fort Clayton, Panama	1922?
Fort Corozal, Panama (<i>see Corozal</i>) ~	
Fort Davis, Gatun, Panama (<i>see Fort William D. Davis; Gatun</i>)	
Fort DeLesseps, Panama	1934
Fort Espinar, Panama (<i>previously Fort Gulick</i>)	1944-95
Fort Gulick, Panama (<i>see Fort Espinar</i>)	
Fort Kobbe, Panama (<i>also see Howard AFB</i>)	1950-78
Fort McKinley, Philippines (<i>see Fort William McKinley</i>)	
Fort Mills, Philippines	1934
Fort Santiago, Philippines	1911*
Fort Sherman, Panama	1942-54
Fort Simonds, Jamaica	1954
Fort Stotsenburg, Philippines (<i>also see Clark AFB</i>)	1934
Fort William D. Davis, Gatun, Panama (<i>aka Fort Davis; also see Gatun</i>)	1934-?
Fort William McKinley, Philippines (<i>aka Fort McKinley</i>)	1934-?

LOCATIONYEARS OF COMSY OPERATION

France Field, Panama (<i>previously, "Coco Walk"</i>)	1934-?
Frankfurt, Germany	1948?-1954-95
Freising, Germany	1960
Fuchu AS, Japan	1960-73
Fürth, Germany (<i>aka Fuerth</i>)	1954-95
Fuessen, Germany	1954
Fukuoka, Japan	1949
Fukui, Honshu, Japan (<i>commissary train stop</i>)	1948-49
Fukushima, Honshu, Japan (<i>commissary train stop</i>)	1949
Fulda, Germany	1954-94
Furstenfeldbruck AB, Germany	1960
Gaeta, Italy (<i>Nexmart</i>)	1991
Gamboa, Panama (PCC)	1914?-79
Garlstadt, Germany	1989-92
Garmisch, Germany	1954-present
Gatun, Panama (PCC) (<i>also see Fort William D. Davis</i>)	1911-?
Gelnhausen, Germany	1954-2007
Germersheim, Germany	1988-93
Giebelstadt, Germany	1986-2006
Giessen, Germany	1954-2007
Gironde, France	1918
Goeppingen, Germany	1954-92
Golden Green, Panama (PCC)	1951
Goose AB, Labrador, Newfoundland (<i>Goose Bay Airport</i>)	1960-73
Grafenwoehr, Germany	1954-present
Grant Heights Family Housing Area, Tokyo, Japan (<i>may be same as Tokyo Branch Commissary #2</i>)	1953-73
Greenham Common, UK (<i>see RAF Greenham Common</i>)	
Green Park, Japan	1965-68
Gricignano, Naples, Italy (<i>aka Gricignano support site; Gricignano Annex; closed when new Naples store opened</i>)	1998-2005
NS Guam (<i>see Agana and Orote</i>)	
NSD Guam (<i>see Agana and Orote</i>)	
NS Guantanamo Bay, Cuba (<i>Nexmart 1991</i>)	?-1960-91-present
Hahn AB, Germany	1954-93
Hakata, Kyushu, Japan	1954-68
Hanau, Germany (<i>aka Pioneer Kaserne; Wolfgang Kaserne</i>)	1954-present
Hannam Village, Seoul, S. Korea	1968-present
Hario Village, Fleet Activities Sasebo, Japan (<i>Nexmart 1991-95</i>) (<i>aka Hario Housing</i>)	1995-present
Harmon (<i>see Ernest Harmon AB, Newfoundland</i>)	
NCS Harold E. Holt, Exmouth, Australia (<i>see Exmouth</i>)	
Harrogate, UK (<i>see RAF Harrogate</i>)	
Haugen, Japan	1954
Hedernheim, Germany	1954
Heidelberg, Germany	1953-present
Heilbronn, Germany	1954-92
Hellenikon AB, Athens, Greece (<i>aka Athenai AF/AS</i>)	1960-90
Helmstadt, Germany	1983-91

LOCATIONYEARS OF COMSY OPERATION

Henry Barracks, Puerto Rico	1954
Herzo Base, Germany	1988-92
Hessich-Oldendorf AS, Germany	?-1991
High Wycombe, UK (<i>see RAF High Wycombe</i>)	
Hirosaki, Honshu, Japan (<i>commissary train stop</i>)	1949
Hoechst, Germany	1954
Hof AS, Germany	1968-73
Hohenfels, Germany	1960-present
Hokkaido, Japan (<i>aka 12th US Army Field Station</i>)	1954-60
NCS Holt, Australia (<i>see Exmouth</i>)	
Holy Loch, Ardanam, Scotland (UK)	1971-92
Howard AB, Panama (<i>Nexmart</i>) (<i>also see Fort Bruija; Fort Kobbe</i>)	1934-99
Idar Oberstein, Germany (<i>aka Strassburg Kaserne</i>)	1954-present
Illesheim, Germany	1966-present
Incirlik AB, Adana, Turkey	1965-present
Ingrandes, France	1954-67
Iraklion AS, Crete (Greece)	1960-94
Is-Sur-Tille, France (<i>see Cote d'Or</i>)	
Istanbul, Turkey	1965-68
Itazuke AB, Japan	1960-68
Iwakune MCAS, Japan	1960; 1971-present
Iwo Jima, Marianas Islands	1949
Izmir AS, Izmir, Turkey	1972-present
Jeddah, Saudi Arabia	1996?
Jimmachi, Japan (<i>aka Camp Young Hans</i>)	1953-54
John Hay AB/AFB, Philippines (<i>aka Baguio and Camp John Hay</i>)	1934-68-77
Johnson AS, Japan (<i>aka Johnson Family Housing</i>)	1968-73
Johnston AB, Johnston Island (Atoll), South Pacific	1960-68
Jono Kokura, Japan	1953-54
JUSMAAG (<i>see Bangkok</i>)	
Kadena AB, Naha, Okinawa (Japan)	1946-present
Kagnew Station, Ethiopia	1965-73
Kagoshima, Kysushu, Japan (<i>commissary train stop</i>)	1949
Kaiserslautern, Germany	1954-73
Kama Statuin, Japan (<i>this is probably a misprint for Kuma Station</i>)	1965-68
Kanaoka Barracks, Japan	1953-56
Kanazawa, Honshu, Japan (<i>commissary train stop</i>)	1948-49
Kanto Base, Japan (<i>may be same as Kanto Mura</i>)	1963- ?
Kanto Mura, Japan (<i>may be same as Kanto Base</i>)	1965?-73
Karamursel AB, Turkey	1965-78
Karlsruhe, Germany	1954-95
Karuizawa, Honshu, Japan (<i>commissary train stop</i>)	1949
Kassel, Germany	1954-73
Katterbach Kaserne, Germany (<i>see Ansbach</i>)	
Kaufbeuren, Germany	1960
Kauhsing, Republic of China (<i>branch of Taipei/Taiwan/Formosa</i>)	1967
NAS Keflavik, Iceland (<i>previously NS Keflavik; Keflavik AS; Keflavik Airport</i>)	1960-2006
Kelley Barracks, Germany	1979-present
NTC/NAF Kenitra, Morocco	@1942-73
Kindley AFB, Bermuda (<i>aka Bermuda AFB; became NAS Bermuda</i>)	1955-1970; 1970-95 as NAS store

LOCATIONYEARS OF COMSY OPERATION

Kirchgoens, Germany	1988-97
Kirknewton, UK (<i>see RAF Kirkennewton</i>)	
Kisarazu AB, Japan	1960
Kitzingen, Germany	1954-2006
Kobe, Honshu, Japan (<i>aka Camp Kobe</i>)	1949, 1953-56?
Kochi, Shikoku, Japan (<i>commissary train stop</i>)	1949
Kofu, Honshu, Japan (<i>commissary train stop</i>)	1949
Kumamoto, Kysushu, Japan (<i>commissary train stop</i>)	1949
Kuma Station, Japan (<i>same as Kama Station</i>)	1965-68
Kunsan AB, S. Korea	?-present
Kure, Japan (<i>see Camp Kure</i>)	
Kwajalein, Marianas Islands	1945?
Kyoto, Honshu, Japan	1949-53-54
La Boca, Panama (PCC)	?-1979
Lajes Field, Azores, (<i>Portugal; previously Lagens Field</i>)	1952-present
Lakenheath, UK (<i>see RAF Lakenheath</i>)	
La Maddalena, Sardinia (Italy)	1983, 1991-present
Landes de Bussac, France (<i>see Bussac</i>)	
Landsberg AB, Germany	1952-60
Landstuhl, Germany	1954-94
Laon AB, France	1960-67
La Maddalena, Sardinia, (Italy) (<i>Nexmart</i>)	1979?-91
La Rochelle, France	1954-67
Lee Barracks, Germany (<i>see Mainz</i>)	
Leghorn, Austria/Italy	1954
Leighton Barracks, Germany (<i>Würzburg/Würzburg</i>)	1954-present
Leipheim, Germany	1954
Linz, Austria	1954
Lisbon, Portugal (<i>Nexmart</i>)	1991-present
Livorno, Pisa, Italy (<i>aka Camp Darby</i>)	1953-1960-present
NA/NSA London, England, UK (<i>Nexmart</i>) (<i>also see West Malling</i>)	1959-present
NCS Londonderry, Northern Ireland	1968-73-?
Long Binh, S. Vietnam (<i>branch of Saigon</i>)	1967-69
Ludwigsburg, Germany	1960-88
Machinato, Okinawa (Japan) (<i>possibly the same as Machiminato/Makiminato</i>)	1956-60-?-87
Mach-Naha, Okinawa (Japan) (<i>same as Machinato/Makiminato?</i>)	1960
Machrihanish, Scotland, UK (<i>Nexmart</i>)	?-1992
Madrid AB, Madrid, Spain	1960
Mainz, Germany (<i>aka Lee Barracks</i>)	1952-54-95
Mainz Kastel, Mainz, Germany	1985
Maizuru, Honshu, Japan [<i>commissary train stop</i>]	1948-49
Makiminato AS, Okinawa (Japan)	1946-87
Manila, Philippines	1898-1934-?
Manila Leave Center, Philippines (<i>same as Manila Post?</i>)	1945
Manila Post, Philippines (<i>same as Manila Leave Center?</i>)	1934-?
Mannheim, Germany	1954-present; possibly as early as 1 June 1946
Manston, UK (<i>see RAF Manston</i>)	
Manzaralui Station, Turkey	1954-68
Marbo area, Guam (<i>also see Andersen AFB</i>)	1945-55

LOCATIONYEARS OF COMSY OPERATION

Mareuil En-Dole, France	1918
Margarita, Panama (PCC)	1951-1979?
Massau, Eritrea	1954
Matsue, Honshu, Japan (<i>commissary train stop</i>)	1949
Matsuyama, Shikoku, Japan (<i>commissary train stop</i>)	1949
McCully Barracks, Germany	1951-2007
McGraw Kaserne, Germany	?-1955-?
Menwith Hill Station, UK (<i>see RAF Menwith Hill</i>)	
Mepal, UK (<i>see RAF Mepal</i>)	
Metz, France	1954-67
NS Midway Island (<i>Pacific Ocean; also see the "Midway Island Community" Store at Quantico, Va., to avoid confusion</i>)	1960-73
Miho AB, Miho Wan, Japan (<i>commissary train stop</i>)	1949-55
Mildenhall, UK (<i>see RAF Mildenhall</i>)	
Mineo, Catania, Sicily	1999-present
Misawa AB, Japan (<i>aka Omisawa</i>)	1953?-1960-present
Mito, Honshu, Japan (<i>commissary train stop</i>)	1949
Miyazaki, Kyushu, Japan (<i>commissary train stop</i>)	1949
Mogadishu, Somalia	1992-94
Mohringen, Germany	1954-66
Molesworth, UK (<i>see RAF Molesworth</i>)	
Monte Lirio, Panama (PCC)	1951
Morioka, Honshu, Japan (<i>commissary train stop</i>)	1949
Moron AB/NB, Spain	1965-77; (Nexmart 1991-present)
Mount Hope, Margarita, Panama	1940-80
Muenster, Germany (<i>aka Münster</i>)	1972-73, 1988-92
Munich, Germany (<i>aka München</i>)	1953-92
Nagai Heights, Japan (<i>also see Yokosuka</i>)	1965-67
Nagano, Honshu, Japan (<i>commissary train stop</i>)	1949
Nagaski, Kyushu, Japan (<i>commissary train stop</i>)	1949
Nagoya, Japan	1949
Naha AB, Okinawa, (Japan)	1946?-65-79
Nancy U.S. AD Complex, Nancy, France	1951?-54-67
Nanteuil-Sur-Marne, France (<i>aka Sales Commissary, Unit #10</i>)	1918
NSA Naples, Italy	1960-present
Nara, Honshu, Japan	1954
Narsarssuak AB, Greenland	1960
Nasugbu Beach, Yokohama, Japan (<i>also see Yokohama Naval Housing Area, 1953-1969; Camp Yokohama</i>)	@1946-53
Nea Makri, Greece	1985-90
Neckarsulm, Germany	1985?-88-91
Negishi Heights, Yokohama, Japan	1946?-48-92 (Nexmart 1991-present)
Neubrucke, Germany	1957?-72-present
New Delhi, India	1966
Neu Ulm, Germany (<i>aka Ulm</i>)	1954?-73, ?-1991
NSA Nice, France	1960-67?
Nichols Field, Philippines	1934
Nievre, France	1918-19
Niigata, Honshu, Japan (<i>commissary train stop</i>)	1949
Nijimura, Japan	1953-56

LOCATIONYEARS OF COMSY OPERATION

Normanni AS, Italy (<i>see San Vito de Normanni AB</i>)	
North Munich, Germany	1966
Nouasseur AB, Morocco	1960-67
Nurnberg, Germany (<i>aka Nürnberg or Nuremburg</i>)	1955
Oberammergau, Germany	1954-73
Okayama, Honshu, Japan (<i>commissary train stop</i>)	1949
Omisawa (<i>see Misawa AB</i>)	
Opicina Garrison, Italy	1954
Orleans, France (<i>included Coligny Caserne and Harbord Barracks</i>)	1954-67
NS Orote, Agana, Guam (<i>aka NS Guam; see Agana for earlier store</i>)	1995-present
Osaka, Honshu, Japan	1953-54
Osan AB, S. Korea	?-present
Oslo, Norway	1960-94
Osterholz-Scharmbeck, Germany (<i>aka Osterholz</i>)	1983-90
Panzer Barracks, Germany (<i>aka Panzer Kaserne</i>)	1988-present
Paraiso, Panama (PCC)	?-1979
Paris, France (<i>aka QM Corps Commissary, Paris; also see Quai de Billy; U.S. Army Post, Paris; Bel Manoir</i>)	1918-1919
Patch Barracks, Stuttgart, Germany (Vaihingen)	1979-present
Pedro Miguel, Panama (PCC)	1952
Peking, China (<i>aka American Barracks, Peking, modern Beijing</i>)	1900-34
Pepperrell AFB, Newfoundland	1960
Perguex, France	1954-67
Peshawar AS, Pakistan	1965-68
Pettit Barracks, Philippines	1934
Phalsbourg AB, France	1960-67
Pinetamare, Caserta, Italy (<i>Nexmart</i>)	1991
Pioneer Kaserne, Germany (<i>see Hanau</i>)	
Pirmasens, Germany	1954-97
Poiters U.S. Army Depot Complex, Eastern France, Poitiers, France	1954-67
Ponce NRS, Puerto Rico (<i>see Fort Allen</i>)	
Pond Barracks, Germany (<i>see Amberg</i>)	
NAS Port Lyautey, Morocco	1960-63
Prestwick AB, Scotland (<i>see RAF Prestwick</i>)	
Pruem AS, Germany	1973-92
Pusan, S. Korea	1961-2006
Quai deBilly, Paris, France	1918-19
Quarry Heights, Balboa Heights, Panama (PCC)	1915-34
QM Sales Commissary Unit #10, France (<i>see Nanteuil-Sur-Marne</i>)	
Rabat Sale Airfield, Morocco	1960-67
RAF Alconbury, Peterborough, England (UK)	1960-present
RAF Bentwaters, UK	1960-93
RAF Brize Norton, UK	1960-65
RAF Bruntingthorpe, UK	1960-1962
RAF Burderop Park Military Hospital, UK	1960-65
RAF Burtonwood, Lancashire, UK	1960-92
RAF Chicksands, UK (<i>aka Chicksands Priory</i>)	1960-95
RAF Cranage, UK	1960
RAF Croughton, Bicester, England, UK	1960-present
RAF East Kirkby, UK	1960

LOCATION	YEARS OF COMSY OPERATION
RAF Elvington, UK	1960
RAF Fairford, Fairford, England, (UK)	1960-82
RAF Greenham Common, UK	1960-92
RAF Harrogate, UK (<i>aka Harrogate Hill, Menwith Hill, Harro Gate Hill Station</i>)	1968-84?
RAF High Wycome, UK	1960-68
RAF Kirknewton Station, Scotland (UK)	1960-65
RAF Lakenheath, St Edmunds, England, (UK)	1960-present
RAF Manston, UK	1960
RAF Menwith Hill, Harrogate, UK (<i>aka Menwith Hill; Menwith Hill Station; Harrogate, etc.</i>)	1968-present
RAF Mepal, UK	1960
RAF Mildenhall, UK	?-present
RAF Molesworth, UK	1960
RAF Prestwick, Scotland (UK) (<i>aka Prestwick AB</i>)	1952-65
RAF Sculthorpe, UK	1960-92
RAF Shepherds Grove, UK	1960
RAF South Ruislip, UK	1960-72?
RAF Sturgate, UK	1960
RAF Upper Heyford, UK	1960-94
RAF West Drayton, UK	1960
RAF Welford, UK	1968
RAF Wethersfield, UK	1960-90
RAF Wimpole Park Hospital, UK	1960
Rainbow City, Panama (PCC)	?1951-1979
Ramey AFB, Puerto Rico	1960-73
Ramstein AB, Germany	1960-present
Red Cross Hospital (<i>numerous locations; see Contrexville</i>)	
Regensburg, Germany	1954-94
Rheinburg, Germany	1987-90
Rhein-Main AB, Frankfurt, Germany	1960-2005
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia	1966-present
Robert Espagne, France (<i>see Espagne</i>)	
Robinson Barracks, Stuttgart, Bad Cannstatt, Germany (<i>aka Stuttgart</i>)	1979-93
Rochefort, France	1954-67
Rochelle, France (<i>see La Rochelle</i>)	-
NS Rodman, Canal Zone, Panama (<i>aka NS Canal Zone; NSA Canal Zone</i>)	1943-67
NS Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico	1960-2004
NB Rota, Spain	1960-present
Rothwestern AB, Germany	1972-73
Rouvres AB, France (<i>see Etain AB</i>)	
Royal Oaks AB, Spain	?-1992
Royal Thai Naval Base, Thailand (<i>aka Utapao AB</i>)	1970s
Saga, Kyushu, Japan (<i>commisary train stop</i>)	1949
Sagami, Japan (<i>aka Sagami Depot</i>)	1953-present
Sagami Depot (<i>see Sagami</i>)	
Sagamihara, Japan (<i>also see Camp Zama</i>)	1953-present
Sagamihara Annex #1, Japan	early 1950s
Sagamihara Annex #2, Japan	early 1950s
Sagamihara Annex #3, Japan	1955

LOCATIONYEARS OF COMSY OPERATION

Saigon, S. Vietnam (<i>MLAG; Naval HQ Support Activity; also see Cholon Compound</i>)	1960-69?
Saint Magwan, England, UK (<i>Nexmart</i>)	1991-present
Saint Nazaire, France	1960-67
NS Saipan, Marianas Islands	1949; 1959-61
Sales Commissary #307, France (<i>see Mareuil-En-Dole</i>)	
Salzburg, Austria	1954
NS Sangley Point, Philippines	1960-63
San Jose, U.S. Virgin Islands	1954
NS San Juan, San Juan, Puerto Rico	1960-69-?
San Juan, Puerto Rico	1934-60
San Juan Post, San Juan, Puerto Rico	1934-72-?
NCS San Miguel, Philippines	?-1972-91
Sanmur, France	1966-67
San Pablo, Spain	1965-71
San Vito de Normanni AB, Italy (<i>aka San Vito; Normanni AS; Brindisi AS</i>)	1965-94
NB Sasebo, Sasebo, Kyushu, Japan	1949-present
Schinnen, Heerlen, Netherlands	1979-present
Schwabach, Germany	1987-92
Shwaebisch Gmeund, Germany	1954-91
Schwaebisch Hall, Germany	1954-93
Schweinfurt, Germany	1954-present
Sculthorpe, UK (<i>see RAF Sculthorpe</i>)	
Sealand Air Depot, Wales, (UK)	1960
Sembach AB, Germany	1960-present
Sendai, Honshu, Japan (<i>aka Camp Sendai</i>)	1949/1953-56
Seoul, S. Korea (<i>Supply Point #41</i>)	1961
Seville AB, Seville, Spain	1960
Shepherds Grove, UK (<i>see RAF Shepherds Grove</i>)	
Sidi Slimane AB, Morocco	1960
Sidi Yahia, Morocco (<i>Navy</i>)	1969-73
NAF/NAS Sigonella, Catania, Sicily (<i>Italy</i>)	1968-?, 1979-present
Soesterberg AB, Utrecht, Netherlands (<i>aka Camp New Amsterdam</i>)	1960-94
Sögel, Germany (<i>also spelled Soegel</i>)	1983-92
Sondrestrom AB, Greenland (<i>aka Sondrestromfjord AB</i>)	1960
Sonthofen, Germany	1954
Souda Bay, Crete (Greece) (<i>Nexmart</i>)	1991-present
South Ruislip, UK (<i>see RAF South Ruislip</i>)	
Spangdahlem AB, Germany (<i>Eifel Military Community East</i>)	1960-present
Spinelli Barracks, Italy	1988-90
Strassburg Kaserne, Germany (<i>see Idar Oberstein</i>)	
Straubing, Germany	1954-66
Sturgate, UK (<i>see RAF Sturgate</i>)	
Stuttgart, Germany (<i>may be Robinson Barracks</i>)	1954-73
Stuttgart/Mohringen, Germany	1960-66
NB Subic Bay, Philippines (<i>aka NS Subic Bay</i>)	?-1960-92
Sukiran, Okinawa (Japan) (<i>aka Fort Buckner; Camp Butler; Zukeran</i>)	1954-56
Tachikawa AB, Japan	1947-77
Taegu, S. Korea (<i>aka Camp Henry; Supply Point 47</i>)	1956, 1959-present
Taejon, S. Korea (<i>Supply Point 46</i>)	1956

LOCATION	YEARS OF COMSY OPERATION
Taichung, Republic of China (<i>branch of Taipei/Taiwan/Formosa</i>)	1967-73
Tainan, Republic of China (<i>branch of Taipei/Taiwan/Formosa</i>)	1967-72
NSA Taipei, Republic of China (<i>aka Formosa; Taiwan; NAS Taipei ; also see branches: Taichung, Tainan, Chia Yi, and Kaohsiung</i>)	1957-73
Taiwan, Republic of China (HQ MAAG, JUSMQAAG) (<i>see Taipei; apparently these are the same stores</i>)	1957-73
Takamatsu, Shikoku, Japan (<i>commissary train stop</i>)	1949
Tan Son Nhut, S. Vietnam	1963
Talora, Peru	1954
Teheran, Iran (<i>see next entry</i>)	
Tehran, Iran (<i>also spelled Teheran</i>)	?-1977-79
Thule AB, Greenland	1960
Thurso, Scotland (UK, <i>Nexmart</i>)	1991-92
Tientsin, Republic of China (<i>aka American Barracks, Tientsin</i>)	1935
Tokushima, Shikoku, Japan	1949
Tokyo, Japan (<i>Downtown; aka U.S. Army Quartermaster commissary, Tokyo</i>)	1946, 1948-49?
Tokyo Branch Commissary #2, Japan (<i>may be Grant Heights or Washington Heights</i>)	1946, 48-?
Tombolo, Italy	1954
Tongshan, Republic of China	1935?
Torrejon AB, Spain	1958-94
Tottori, Honshu, Japan (<i>commissary train stop</i>)	1949
Toul-Rosiere AB, France	1960-67
Tourvant, Cite de Tourvent, France	1957
Toyama, Honshu, Japan (<i>commissary train stop</i>)	1948-49
Trier, Germany	1985-94
Trieste Garrison, Italy	1948, 1954
NS Trinidad, British West Indies	1960-68-?
Trois Fontaines, France	1954-67
Truman Plaza, Germany (<i>see Berlin</i>)	
Tsoying, Republic of China (<i>branch of Taipei/Taiwan/Formosa</i>)	1967-72
12th US Army Field Station (<i>see Hokkaido</i>)	
Udorn Thani Royal Thai Air Base, Thailand	1970s
Uijongbu, South Korea (<i>aka Supply Point 39</i>)	1956
Ulm (<i>see New Ulm</i>)	
Upper Heyford, UK (<i>see RAF Upper Heyford</i>)	
U.S. Army Post Paris, France (<i>aka Bel Manoir; Belle Manor; included Camp des Lodges</i>)	1954-67
Utapao AB, Thailand (<i>see Royal Thai Naval Base</i>)	
Utsunomiya, Honshu, Japan (<i>commissary train stop</i>)	1949
Vaihingen, Germany (<i>see Patch Barracks</i>)	
Verdun U.S. Army Garrison, Verdun, France	1954-68
Verona, Italy	1960
Vicenza, Italy (<i>aka Caserne Ederle</i>)	1957, 1960-present
Vienna, Austria	1954
NSA Villefranche, France	1963
Vilseck, Germany	1987-present
Vitry le Francois, France	1966-67
Vogelweh, Kaiserslautern, Germany (<i>formerly Vogelweh AB</i>)	1947, 1952-present

LOCATIONYEARS OF COMSY OPERATION

Wakkanai AS, Japan	1972
Warren, Germany	1968
Washington Heights, Japan (<i>may be Tokyo Branch Commissary #2</i>)	1947-60?
Weilimdorf, Germany	?
Wertheim, Germany	1954-92
West Drayton, UK (<i>see RAF West Drayton</i>)	
West Malling, England, (UK)	1961-62
West Ruislip, England, (UK, <i>Nesmar</i>)	1991-present
Wethersfield, UK (<i>see RAF Wethersfield</i>)	
Wheelus AFB, Libya	1960-68
Wiesbaden, Germany (<i>formerly Wiesbaden AB</i>)	1960-present
Wildflecken, Germany (<i>store 1</i>)	1954-94
Wildflecken, Germany (<i>store 2</i>)	1988-94
Wimpole Park, UK (<i>see RAF Wimpole Park</i>)	
Woensdrecht Airport, Netherlands	?-1989
Wolfgang Kaserne, Germany (<i>see Hanau</i>)	
Worms, Germany	1954-99
Wuerzburg [Würzburg], Germany (<i>aka Leighton Barracks</i>)	1954-present
Yamaguchi, Honshu, Japan (<i>commissary train stop</i>)	1949
NHA Yokohama, Japan (<i>also see Nasugbu Beach, Army store @1946-1953</i>)	@1953-58
Yokohama QM Commissary, Japan (<i>became Navy store in 1959</i>)	@1958-69-?
NESC Yokosuka, Japan (<i>also see Nagai Heights</i>)	1945, 1955-present
Yokota AB, Japan	1953-present
Yongsan, S. Korea	1979-present
Zaragoza AB, Spain	1960-64, ?-1992
Zukeran, Okinawa (Japan) (<i>aka Camp Butler; Fort Butler; Sukiran</i>)	1954-56
Zweibrucken, Germany	1960-93
Zwri, Japan	1970s-1980s



1978: TINKER AIR FORCE BASE,
Oklahoma. Before a grand opening, you need a
groundbreaking. Here, it's done by (from left): Lois
Jones, representing Tinker NCO Wives Club; Barbara
Fiorini, Officers' Wives Club; and Joanné Salem, wife
of Col. Leroy Salem, commander of AFCEMS' Central
Region. U.S. Air Force photo: Ellis Young

COMMISSARY

COMMISSARY HOURS

MON	1100 - 1700
TUES	CLOSED
WED	CLOSED
THURS	1100 - 1700
FRI	1100 - 1700
SAT	1000 - 1600
SUN	1000 - 1600

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2007: BUEDINGEN, Germany (opposite page): A small group gathered at the commissary on its final day to say their goodbyes on October 12. They are (l-r, front): James Baptiste, store worker; Tanja Pearson, store worker; Nilla Faust, cleaning lady; James Beach, store manager; Alexi Vazquez, work supervisor. Behind the employees are (l) Dan Skene, a thirty-five-year customer, and (r) Bob Parker, a customer. DeCA photo: Gerri Young

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GLOSSARY

Listed here are frequently-used terms and acronyms related to military commissaries. Please note it is meant to assist with acronyms and unusual words appearing in this book; it is not a general guide to military jargon and acronyms. Many of the acronyms listed here have additional meanings that are not commissary-related; those additional meanings are usually not listed here.

A

AAB	Army air base		
AAF	Army air field; also (pre-1947), Army Air Forces		
AAFES	Army and Air Force Exchange Service		
AB	Air base		
ABU	DeCA's acquisition business unit		
ACAPS	Automated Commissary Accounting & Procurement System	APCAPS	Automated Payroll, Cost and Personnel System
ACOC	Advanced Commissary Operations/Officers' Course	APD	A high speed transport (Navy)
ACOS	Automated Commissary Operating System	APO	Army Post Office
ACS	Automated Commissary System (Navy)	Apothecary	Now antiquated, this term referred to a pharmacist or druggist, or the pharmacy or drug store in which he/she worked.
ACT	Annual commissary training (AFCOMS)		
AD	Army depot	AR	Army regulation
AF	Air Force	ARB	Army Reserve Base
AFA	The Air Force Association; <i>also</i> , the U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colo.	ARDEC	Armament Research, Development, and Engineering Center at Picatinny Arsenal, N.J.
AFAF	Air Force auxiliary field	Armistice	Cease-fire that essentially ended World War I at 11 a.m. on November 11, 1918 – “the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month.” This was the original Armistice Day; today it is Veterans Day.
AFB	Air Force base	Armistice Day	November 11. Today it is called “Veterans Day” to honor all American veterans, living and deceased, from all American wars.
AFCOMS	Air Force Commissary Service, 1976-1991		
AFESA	Air Force Engineering and Services Agency	ARNG	Army National Guard
AFGE	American Federation of Government Employees	ARVN	Army of the Republic of Viet Nam (South Vietnam)
AFLC	Air Force Logistics Command	AS	Air station
AFM	Air Force manual	ASAP	As soon as possible
AFMC	Armed Forces Marketing Council	ASCR	Armed services commissary regulation
AFR	Air Force regulation	ASCSR	Armed services commissary store regulation (this is a more-accurate version of ASCR)
AFS	Air Force station	ASD	Assistant secretary of defense
AGB	Navy designation for an icebreaker	“At cost”	Same as “cost price”: to sell items at the same price for which they were purchased by the store; that is, selling at no profit.
aka	Also known as	ATF	Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms
ALA	American Logistics Association	ATM	Automated teller machine
ALC	Air Logistics Center	AUSA	Association of the U.S. Army
AMC	Army Medical Center; also, Air Mobility Command		
AMMUS	Air Force Minicomputer Multiuser System	BAS	Basic Allowance, Subsistence
ANG	Air National Guard	BB	Battleship (Navy designation)
ANGB	Air or Army National Guard Base	BCD	Board of Commissary Directors
Annex	“Annex” in the military sense means either an addition to an existing regulation or manual, or an addition of land and buildings to an existing installation. But “Annex” in this book usually refers to a commissary annex, which would be an additional commissary outlet on a military installation; it could be separated from the main store, or attached directly to it. If attached, the store would		

B

1963: SCHENECTADY ARMY DEPOT, New York (opposite page). The store staff pre-packaged and pre-priced all its produce, making weighing by a produce clerk, or by a cashier, unnecessary. This commissary was one of those closed after World War II by agreement with Congress, but it reopened shortly after the Korean War. *Military Market, Army Times publications*

BCOC	Basic Commissary Operations/Officers' Course	CARTS	DeCA's Commissary Advanced Resale Transaction System
BDO	Blanket delivery order	Case Lot	A large amount of merchandise that will be sold in case quantities only.
BDU	Battle-dress uniform; <i>also see</i> Fatigues	Case Lot Sale	Sales event of deeply discounted goods, available only by the case; DeCA holds such events worldwide at least twice per year.
BEQ	Bachelor enlisted quarters	CAT	Consumer awareness team; crisis action team
Berm	An earthen wall or embankment used in landscaping, especially one that adjoins a building	CATS	Case and truckload sale system
BOA	Board of advisors	CBO	Congressional Budget Office; <i>also</i> , central buying office
BOD	Board of directors (DeCA, AAFES, AFCOMS); Building occupancy date; Beneficial occupancy date	CBU	DeCA's contract management business unit
Bollard	A protective post of wood, metal, or cement, placed in front of machinery, a dock, or a building that adjoins parking areas, to prevent vehicles from causing damage to the structure	CC	Commander; commander's office; command section
BOQ	Bachelor officers quarters	CCC	Civilian Conservation Corps, a New Deal organization formed in 1933, run by military personnel and with the cooperation of the U.S. military services.
BOSS	Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers; Better Opportunities for Single Servicemembers; <i>and</i> , Betterment Of Single Soldiers	CCP	Commissary Career Program
BRAC	Base realignment and closure	CCSS	Commissary Customer Service Survey
BSE	Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy, commonly referred to as "Mad Cow Disease"	CCTV	Closed circuit television
BU	Business unit	CDC	Central distribution center
Bumboats		CDR	Commander (Navy); critical design review
or Bum Boats	Vessels of varying size in ports throughout the world, carrying merchants who sold all manner of goods to sailors in ships visiting their port. These merchants were sometimes permitted to come aboard ship, but usually only when the ship was in its home port. The merchants were known by various names, such as "Bumboat men," "Bumboat Women," bumboaters, and even "Bums."	CE	Commercial enterprise
Butterine	An early name for Oleomargarine	CEO	Chief executive officer
BVI	Best Value Item	CFE	Conventional Forces Europe
BX	Base exchange (on Air Force bases); <i>also see</i> PX	CFO	Chief financial officer
C		CG	Coast Guard; commanding general; command group
		CGES	Coast Guard Exchange System
CA	Heavy cruiser (Navy designation)	CGI	Computer-generated image
CAM	Commissary Awareness Month	CGMWR	Coast Guard Morale Welfare & Recreation
CAMI	Commissary Audit of Market Information (Air Force); <i>also</i> , Commissary Automated Management Information	CGRS	Coast Guard Radio Station
CAMIS	Commercial Activities Management Information System	CGS	Coast Guard station
Canteen	Originally, a co-operative establishment where refreshments (including alcohol in some instances, but not in all), some form of recreation or entertainment, and camaraderie were all part of the experience.	CGX	Coast Guard exchange
CAO	Computer-assisted ordering	Checkout	A cash register and its respective lane.
Car Lot		Checkout	AFCOMS' employee newsletter, 1985-1991
(also, Carlot)	A car lot is the amount of material (in this case, groceries and household items) that can be loaded into in one railroad boxcar.	CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
		Clerestory	Upper or raised portion of a building's exterior wall, containing windows for lighting the central part of the structure's interior.
		CMD	Coalition of Military Distributors
		CMH	U.S. Army Center for Military History
		CMIS	Commissary Management Information System
		CMPP	Central meat processing plant (Ramstein, Germany)
		CMSgt	Chief master sergeant (Air Force)
		CNN	Cable News Network
		CO	Commissary officer (<i>also see</i> CSO and store director); commanding officer; contracting officer
		COB	Close of business; <i>also</i> , Commissary Operating Board
		COE	Corps of Engineers (Army)
		Coffin Cases	Open horizontal freezers, commonly used for frozen juice concentrate, various packaged meats, etc.
		COG	DeCA's corporate operations group
		COLA	Cost of living allowance; cost of living adjustment (in pay)

COM	Commissary operating manual (Army)
Commissaries	A plural form of the following term; <i>also</i> , any food-stuffs to be sold to, or issued to, military personnel.
Commissary	Multiple definitions. In this book it is usually a store selling food items to military customers and their families. Prior to 1867, it could also be a storehouse for food, or an officer or sergeant in charge of such a storehouse. In civilian life (especially in Hollywood), it is usually a cafeteria.
Commissary steward	A term used in the 1950s-1960s denoting a uniformed commissary staff member whose duties included marketing—particularly, decorations and displays.
Complex	A group of commissaries under the direction of a complex office, usually located at one of the stores in the complex. The term was used by pre-DeCA commissary organizations. DeCA's "Zones" provided similar support and management.
Comstore	Slang for a sales commissary. The term was especially popular 1950s - 1970s.
COMS	Commissary Operations and Management System
CONUS	Continental United States; this refers to the "lower 48" United States – that is, not including Alaska or Hawaii. It is also used to signify the <i>Contiguous</i> United States. In recent times CONUS has come to include Alaska and Hawaii, but this usage is technically incorrect.
COO	Chief operating officer
The Cooperator	Commercial enterprise magazine published by <i>Army Times</i> publishing company in 1953-54. It was aimed at Commissaries, their suppliers, and their political supporters. It was the predecessor to <i>Military Market and Times Cooperator</i> (later simply called <i>Military Market</i>).
COPPS	Commissary Online Product and Pricing System
CoS	Chief of staff
Cost price	Same as "at cost": to sell items at the same price for which they were purchased; that is, selling at no profit.
Cost plus five	A reference to the 5 percent commissary surcharge; items are sold "at cost," plus 5 percent for transportation, building/construction costs, etc.
Cost plus transportation	To sell items at the same price for which they were purchased, <i>plus</i> an additional amount to cover the costs of transportation.
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CPO	Chief petty officer (Navy, Coast Guard)
CSA	Confederate States of America
CSDP	Commissary Successor Development Program
CSO	Commissary sales officer (mostly before and during WW II, but some use thereafter, as well, especially by the Navy); <i>also</i> , Commissary store officer (used until 2000); <i>unofficially replaced by</i> "store director" in 2000.

CSRS	Civil Service Retirement System
CSSC	Customer service support center
Comp Time	Compensatory leave given (rather than pay) for official work performed during off-hours
CTRF	Commissary trust revolving fund
Consumer advocate	At DeCA, this position was briefly known as the ombudsman. The consumer advocate was in charge of convening the patron and retiree councils.
CV	Fleet (large) aircraft carrier (Navy designation)
CVE	Escort carrier (Navy designation)
CVN	Aircraft carrier, nuclear powered (Navy designation)
CY	Calendar year

D

DABS	DeCA's Automated Business System
DAG	Director's action group
DAISRC	DeCA Automated Information System Review Council
DAO	Defense Accounting Office
DARTS	DeCA Automated Requisitioning & Tracking System
DBCRA	Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act
DBES	DeCA Business Enterprise System
DBOF	Defense Business Operating Fund (ended December 11, 1996)
DCABS	DeCA Commissary Automated Business System
DCB	Defense Commissary Board
DCIBS	DeCA Commissary Information Business Systems
DCIS	Defense Commissary Information System
DCOB	Defense Commissary Operating Board
DCSC	Defense Construction Supply Center
DCSLOG	Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics
DD	Defense Department (DoD); defense depot; daily delivery; destroyer (Navy designation)
DDCG	DeCA Distribution Center Germersheim, Germany
DDDE	Defense Distribution Depot, Europe
DDMP	Defense Depot Mechanicsburg (Pennsylvania)
DDRE	Defense Distribution Region East (at Cumberland Army Depot, Pa.)
DE	Destroyer escort (Navy designation); directorate of engineering
DeCA	Defense Commissary Agency
DeCATT	DeCA Transition Team
DEERS	Defense Eligibility Enrollment Reporting System (DoD)
DEFCON	Defense condition (also, THREATCON)
Desiccated	Dried-out, usually by design; <i>Desiccated Vegetables</i> would be purposely dried out for storage and transport; when they were to be eaten, they would be re-hydrated by being placed in water (usually hot or boiling).
DET	Detachment
DF	Directorate of facilities

post traders were allowed to keep doing business at such posts until 1893.

FSO	Field support office
FSN	Federal stock number
FWA	Fraud, waste and abuse
FY	Fiscal year

G

GAO	Government Accountability Office; <i>also</i> , General Accounting Office (same organization but different name; the latter was used prior to July 7, 2004)
GC	General counsel
Gondola Shelving	Free-standing shelving unit(s) forming an "island" between two aisles for displaying goods in a supermarket or other self-service store. It is the gondola shelving in any commissary or supermarket that forms the aisles in which customers push their carts.
GPRA	Government Performance and Results Act
Grog	Liquor, usually very strong rum, that has been diluted with water. The rum was so potent – sometimes over 100 proof (50 percent alcohol)—that dilution was an absolute necessity. It was from a ships' grog that sailors' daily alcohol ration was taken. Term originated pre-Civil War.
GS	General Schedule (an employment classification for government employees)
GSA	General Services Administration

H

HABA	Health and beauty aids (<i>also</i> , HBA)
HAC	House (of Representatives) Appropriations Committee
HASC	House (of Representatives) Armed Services Committee
Haversack	A bag or backpack made of sturdy cloth or leather, in which soldiers would carry rations and prized possessions. Skillets, tin cups and plates, and eating utensils were often attached to the outside of the haversack, ready for quick use during momentary pauses in the march.
HazMat(s)	Hazardous material(s)
HBA	Health and beauty aids (<i>also</i> , HABA)
HBC	Health and beauty care
The Hill	Both houses of Congress; "The Hill" refers to Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C.
HMMWV	Official acronym for high mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicle
HMR	Home meal replacement
HMS	His/Her Majesty's Ship (used by British Navy)
HMW	Health, morale, and welfare
HQ	Headquarters

HR

HRBU	Human resources business unit
HRO	Human resources office
HROD	DeCA human resource operations division
Humvee	
αHUMVEE	Popular acronym for the HMMWV, a high mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicle

HVAC

Hybrid

IASA

IBM

ICC

ID

IG

IM

"In kind"

IR

IRM

IRS

ISSA

IT

ITBU

JA

JAG

JCS

JIT

JRB

JSCC

JTF

KCS

KFOR

Kodiak

Lahar

LCI

Liberty Ship

Human resources; *formerly*, personnel *or* manpower and personnel *or* personnel and manpower

Human resources business unit

Human resources office

DeCA human resource operations division

Popular acronym for the HMMWV, a high mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicle

Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning

Some sort of combination commissary and exchange

I

Inter-agency support agreement

International Business Machines Co.

Isthmian Canal Commission

Identification; identification card

Inspector general

Information management

Goods, subsistence, *or* rations issued in place of money

Internal review

Information resource management

Internal Revenue Service

Inter-service support agreement

Information technology

DeCA information technology business unit

J

Judge advocate

Judge advocate general

Joint Chiefs of Staff

Just-in-time delivery

Joint Reserve Base

Joint Service Commissary Council

Joint task force

K

Kaiserslautern Cold Storage

NATO's Kosovo Force

An island in the Aleutian chain, home to a base owned first by the Navy and then by the Coast Guard.

L

A mudflow caused by the ash, pumice, *or* lava from an erupting volcano mixing with avalanches and rain, melting glaciers, *or* other source of water. Upon hardening the mudflow often has the consistency of concrete.

Landing craft, infantry, a U.S. naval vessel used for transporting troops, especially during an invasion from the sea.

A cargo and transport vessel built by the United States in large numbers during World War II.

LIFE	Leadership, Integrity, Flexibility and Enjoyment (DeCA's values, 2002-2007)
LIFO	"Last-In, First-Out"
LL	DeCA's legislative liaison office (located in the Pentagon)
LMI	Logistics Management Institute
LN	Local national
LOA	Letter of agreement
LRA	Local reuse authority (for BRAC installations)
LSN	Local stock number
LSS or L6S	Lean Six Sigma
LST	Landing ship, tank

M

MAC	Military Airlift Command
MACOM	Major army command
MAD	Mutually assured destruction, the essential Cold War strategy practiced by both sides to assure the other would not begin a nuclear exchange, knowing that to do so would assure its own destruction.
"Mad Cow"	
Disease	Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE)
MAJCOM	Major command (Air Force)
MAMI (or MMI)	Market and Management Information, Incorporated; Military Audits Market Information; or Military Audit Marketing Information
MATS	Military Air Transport Service (Air Force)
MBU	DeCA marketing business unit
MCAB	Marine Corps air base
MCAS	Marine Corps air station
MCB	Marine Corps base
MCC, MCCO	Marine Corps Commissary Office
MCEX	Marine Corps exchange
MCI	Meal, combat, individual
MCLB	Marine Corps logistics base
MCR	Marine Corps Reserve
MCRD	Marine Corps recruit depot
MCSA	Marine Corps support activity
MDV	Military Distributors of Virginia
MDW	Military District of Washington
Mess	
or Mess Hall	Obsolete military term for what is now called a "dining facility" or "dining hall"
MFI	Military/medical food inspector
MFR	Memorandum for the record; manufacturer
Military Grocer	A commercial-enterprise magazine aimed at commissaries and their suppliers, published 1991-2006
Military Market	A commercial-enterprise magazine aimed at commissaries, exchanges, and their suppliers, published from 1950-2003. It had merged with <i>The Cooperator</i> in 1955 as <i>The Military Market and Times Cooperator</i> ; later it was simply called <i>Military Market</i> . For awhile it was an on-line publication, but was finally discontinued.

Military Retailer This commercial-enterprise magazine aimed at commissaries, exchanges, and their suppliers replaced *Military Grocer* and *Military Exchange*; it was first published in 2005.

"Millennium Bug"

See Y2K Bug

MILSBILLS

Military standard billing system

MILSCAP

Military standard contract administration procedures

MILSTAMP

Military standard transportation and movement procedures

MILSTRAP

Military standard transaction reporting and accounting procedures

MILSTRIP

Military standard requisitioning and issue procedures

Mini-Com

See Annex and Wee Serv

MIPR

Military interdepartmental purchase request

MM

Military Market magazine

MMI

(or **MAMI**)

Market and Management Information, Incorporated

MOA

Memorandum of agreement

MOE

Measurements of effectiveness

MOP

Measurements of performance

MOU

Memorandum of understanding

MP, MPs

Military police

MPO

Military post office

MRE

Meal, Ready-to-Eat

MSC

Management support center; Military Sealift Command

MSL

Master stock list

Murder Board

Meeting in which personnel from various components within an organization frankly critique the work of others within the same organization. The term, which apparently originated among the U.S. military's drill instructors, is now sometimes used in academic and government appointment contexts. DeCA's Transition Team used murder boards when determining the size and functions of each of the new agency's directorates.

MVB

"Most Valued Benefit," a commissary benefit awareness campaign in 1992.

MWCOR

TSA's Midwest Commissary Region

MWR

Morale, welfare and recreation

N

NA

Naval activity

NAAS

Naval auxiliary air station

NAB

Naval amphibious base

NAD

Naval aviation depot

NAF

Non-appropriated funds; naval air facility/naval aviation facility

NAGC

National Association of Government Communicators

NAGE

National Association of Government Employees

NARA

National Archives and Records Administration

NARFE

National Association of Retired Federal Employees

PA	Public affairs
PACAF	Pacific Air Forces (Hickam AFB, Hawaii)
PACOM	Pacific Command
PAO	Public affairs officer; public affairs office
PAT	Process Action Team
PBD	Program budget decision
PBO	Performance-Based Organization
PC	Personal computer; politically correct
PCC	Panama Canal Commission; purchase card call
PCO	Procurement contracting officer
PCS	Permanent change of station
PD	Position description
PDED	Portable data entry device
PDF	Portable data file
PDM	Program decision memorandum
PDS	Permanent duty station/personnel data system
Pea Meal	Dried, crushed green peas, used in soups and stews, or eaten dry and as-is.
PF	Patrol Frigate (Navy designation)
PG	Proving Ground
PIIN	Procurement instrument identification number
PIN	Personal identification number
Pipeline	The logistical support system for getting food to commissaries, especially overseas.
PL	Public law
Plan-o-gram	A floor and stocking plan, unique to each store
PMD	Program management directive
PME	Progressive Market Excellence (DeCA's PBO Concept)
PMV	Private motor vehicle
PO	Petty officer (Navy and Coast Guard); purchase order
POC	Point of contact; privately owned conveyance; DeCA Provisional Operational Operations Center, which later became the Operations Support Center (OSC)
POM	Program objective memorandum; purchase order management
POS	Point of sale
POS-M	Point of sale modernization
POS-TR	Point of sale technology refresh
Post Trader	A merchant, assigned to a particular post, who sold all manner of goods to the soldiers at that post; post traders supplanted sutlers in the 1870s; were themselves abolished in 1893.
POV	Privately owned vehicle (personal vehicle)
PQA	President's Quality Award
Prime BEEF	(Exercise) Base engineer emergency force
Prime FARE	(Exercise) Food and Readiness
Prime FARE	
RODEO	(Training and competition) Food and Readiness; readiness operational demonstration of excellence in organization
Prime RIBS	(Exercise) Readiness in base services
Privatization	The movement placing functions formerly performed

by the federal government into the hands of private business.

Provide Relief	Joint Task Force Provide Relief was the UN mission to provide humanitarian aid to the people of war-torn Somalia in 1992-1993
PSF&E	Personnel Support, Families and Education
PWRMR	Pre-positioned war reserve materiel requirement
PWS	Performance work statement; programmable work station
PX	Post exchange (on Army posts); <i>also see</i> BX
PY	Prior year; program year

Q

QA	Quality Analysis; Quality Assessment; Quality Assurance
QAE	Quality Assurance Evaluator
QM	Quartermaster
QMC	Quartermaster Corps
QMG	Quartermaster General
QoL	Quality of Life
Quality Council	Group of senior DeCA leaders providing vision and leadership for implementing the agency's policies on quality.
Quartermaster	An individual responsible for supplying troops with quarters, clothing, and equipment, and provisions.
Quartermaster Corps	The branch of the Army that supplies soldiers with provisions, water, fuel, clothing, equipment, weapons, and ammunition.
Quartermaster Sales Store	An outlet for uniforms and other hard goods needed by soldiers
Quonset Hut	Prefabricated shelters with curved roofs, usually made of metal and wood, manufactured and used in large numbers during World War II, as well as for many years following that conflict.

R

R&D	Research and Development
R&R	Rest and Relaxation [or Recuperation]
RCMPP	Ramstein Central Meat Processing Plant; Ramstein Consolidated Meat Processing Plant
RDC	Regional Distribution Center; Remote Distribution Center
RDO	Regular Day Off (in a nine-day work schedule)
Red Horse	Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron, Engineering. These Air Force engineering units originated in the 1960s. They were trained and equipped to make heavy repairs, upgrade airfields and associated facilities, and support weapons systems deployment to the theaters of operations.
Reefer	A refrigeration unit, either upright or horizontal; also,

Region a naval supply vessel with refrigeration equipment.
A term used by most commissary organizations, referring to a geographical region in which every commissary answered to a region headquarters. Often as not, "region" referred to the headquarters itself. "Region level" specifically referred to the headquarters.

Retiree Council Group of well-placed military retirees.

RFID Radio frequency identification

RFP Request for proposal

RIF Reduction in force

RM Resource management

RMS Royal Mail Ship, a designation used on passenger and commercial vessels under the British flag that carry the mail as part of their cargos: i.e., RMS *Titanic*.

ROA Resale ordering agreement; also, received on account

ROI Return on investment

ROIC Resale officer in charge

ROK Republic of Korea

Roll-up
or **Rollup** An accumulation of all bills from a specific vendor for a specific period of time. The bills would be "rolled up" together and paid with one payment.

RPG Rocket-propelled grenade

RPOS Retail point of sale

RSEP Real Store Experience Program

RTE Ready-to-eat

S

SA Safety and Administration Office (DeCA); store administrator

SAB Science Advisory Board

SADBU Small and disadvantaged business utilization

SAF Secretary of the Air Force; subject to availability of funds

SAG DeCA's Savings Analysis Group, aka Strategic Analysis Group, aka Strategic Action Group

Sales

Commissary A commissary; an old term used to differentiate a commissary sales store, where food items are sold at cost from an issue commissary, where goods were given to uniformed personnel. The term was widely used prior to 1976.

Sales Store When referring to a commissary, the definition is the same as sales commissary.

SAM Surface-to-air missile

SAVER-2000 Service, Access, Value, Efficiency, & Response, to bring DeCA to the year 2000 and beyond (DeCA campaign)

SAVES Standard Automated Voucher Examination System

Sawtooth roof A roof design that resembles a saw's teeth when viewed in profile. This device is often used to facilitate the use of skylights, as the perpendicular portions of

the "teeth" are often made of glass. The design has long been popular in the construction of factories and other large structures.

Self-checkout

A serious, sometimes-fatal disease brought about by the lack of Vitamin C—a primary vitamin in fruits and vegetables. A common problem among sailors on long voyages, it also was a problem at frontier forts at the "end of the pipeline" where fruits and vegetables were rare luxuries.

The men at a frontier post who contracted scurvy.

Originally, a water fountain located near a ship's coal scuttle; rumor and ship's gossip was often exchanged there, so the term today means "rumor" or "gossip," referring to what a group of military people—or civilian employees in any profession—may be talking about. *See Appendix 3.*

Subsistence distribution center

Navy combat units specializing in construction projects but also ready for combat. Their name comes from a play on words, using the initials in their official name, Navy Combat Construction Battalion—"NCCB," shortened to "CB" and pronounced "Sea Bee." "Bee" carried the connotation that these personnel were "busy as Bees" and also were capable of using their "stingers."

South East Asia Treaty Organization

Senior Executive Council (under Secretary of Defense)

Secretary of Defense

TSA's Southeast Commissary Region

DeCA's Special Emphasis Program Committee

Senior Executive Service

Standard form

Head of state in Iran prior to 1979

Sign, placed on a sales shelf, to draw attention to a specific item, price, or policy

Serial number

Statements of account

Sales ordering system; sales operating system; store operating statement.

Scope of work; statement of work

Security police (Air Force); shore patrol (Navy)

Canned spiced ham, pioneered by the Hormel company before World War II.

Social Security Administration

Social Security Account Number (also, see SSN)

Submarine (Navy designation)

Ballistic missile submarine (Navy designation)

Social Security Number (also, see SSAN); **Nuclear-Powered Submarine** (Navy designation)

Shrink, spoilage and pilferage; also, Store-Specific Plan-o-gram

SCO

Scurvy

Scurvy Gang

Scuttlebutt

SDC

SEABEES

SEATO

SEC

SECDEF,

SECOR

SEPC

SES

SF

Shah

Shelf Talker

SN

SOA

SOS

SOW

SP

Spam

SSA

SSAN

SSB

SSBN

SSN

SSP

STANFINS	Standard financial systems	T&A	it is almost always spelled <i>Tatar</i> .
STEP	Stripes for Exceptional Performers Program (USAF)	Time and attendance	
Store		Technical bulletin	
Administrator	Term unofficially adopted in 2000 to replace the old "deputy commissary officer" title. The store administrator answers to the store director, and is in charge of the store's front end operations and administrative functions.	To be determined	
Store Director	The person in charge of the entire operation at a sales commissary. Prior to 2000, was known as the "commissary officer." The old term was unofficially abandoned because it was a carryover from the days when the person in charge of a commissary was actually an active-duty military officer. By 2000, this was no longer the case at any of DeCA's commissaries.	DeCA's Transportation business unit	
Store Manager	The person in charge of a sales commissary's retail operations. Answers to the store director (formerly, to the commissary officer).	Telephone device for the deaf	
Stores	Places where food is sold; <i>or</i> , the food items themselves; <i>or</i> , the places food is kept (stored), such as storehouses or warehouses.	Temporary duty	
Strat Plan	Strategic plan	Tactical field exchange	
Subsistence	Rations or other foodstuffs.	Temporary full-time	
Subsistence stores	The "stores" in this case refers not to a sales facility, but to the goods themselves, particularly if they were stored somewhere.	THREATCON	Threat condition
Surcharge	A specific amount added to the purchase price to pay for specific expenses; the commissary surcharge, currently 5 percent of the purchase, pays for construction and major modifications of commissaries.	TISA	Troop Issue Subsistence Activity
Sutler	A merchant who sold all manner of goods to soldiers in or near their camps or posts, prior to 1870. They became officially known as Post Traders in 1870, and remained in business at Army posts under that designation until 1893. The word apparently comes from one of two the Dutch words: <i>soetelen</i> , meaning "to perform menial duties," or <i>soeteler</i> , "a modest vendor" – meaning he/she sold everyday goods.	TISO	Troop issue subsistence officer
Suttle	Used as a verb, <i>to suttle</i> meant to carry out the duties of a sutler, particularly the sale of food items to soldiers.	TOA	Time off award; total obligation authority
T		TQM	Total Quality Management
Tartar	As used in this book, a Tartar was a member of a Mongolian tribe that invaded West Asia and East Europe in the Middle Ages. They were a tough, warrior people, as used to privations as they were accustomed to winning battles. In fact, "To catch a Tartar" used to be a common way of saying "To take on more than you could handle." When John C. Calhoun used the term in the early nineteenth century, as quoted in this book, <i>Tartar</i> was the accepted spelling; today,	TRFA	Trust Revolving Fund Account
		TROA	The Retired Officers' Association
		TSA	U.S. Army Troop Support Agency (1972 – 1991)
		TSA Today	U.S. Army Troop Support Agency employee magazine
		TS&R	Troop support and readiness
		TSP	Thrift Savings Plan
		U	
		UCCS	United Coupon Clearing House
		UK	United Kingdom (England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland)
		UM	Unit of measure; upward mobility; users manual
		UN	United Nations
		Unaccompanied personnel	Spouse and children do not accompany a service member to his/her duty station, usually overseas.
		UPC	Universal Product Code
		UPN	Universal Product Number
		USA	United States of America; United States Army
		USAF	United States Air Force
		USAFR	United States Air Force Reserve
		USAMMC	United States Army Major Medical Command
		USAR	United States Army Reserve
		USC	
		(also U.S.C.)	United States Code (of law)
		USCG	United States Coast Guard
		USCS	United States Customs Service
		USCGS	United States Coast Guard station
		USD	Under secretary of defense
		USD(AT&L)	Under secretary of defense for acquisition, technology, and logistics
		USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
		USMC	United States Marine Corps
		USN	United States Navy
		USNA	United States Naval Academy
		USNR	United States Navy Reserve
		USNS	United States Naval Ship (used by Navy, but less frequently than USS)
		USO	United Service Organization

USPHS	U.S. Public Health Service
USS	United States Ship (common use)
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (the Soviet Union)

V

VA	Value analysis; Veterans Administration; vulnerability assessment
V-CJD	Variant Creutzfeldt-Jacob Disease ("Mad Cow")
VCM	Vendor credit memo/memorandum
VCS	Veterans' Canteen Service
VDT	Video display terminal
VE Day	Victory in Europe Day (May 8, 1945)
Vendor	An individual or organization selling products to commissaries for resale to commissary customers.
VERA	Voluntary early retirement authority
Vet	Veteran; however, in commissaries a vet is usually a veterinary officer, who inspects food items at military sales commissaries; sometimes, "vet" also is used as a generic term to denote a veterinary service technician or a medical food inspector
Veterans' Day	<i>See</i> Armistice Day
VJ Day	Victory over Japan Day: various dates, usually either August 12, 1945 (when the Japanese announced they would surrender) to September 2, 1945 (when they actually signed the surrender documents aboard the USS <i>Missouri</i>)
Vision	DeCA's employee magazine
VLTP	Voluntary leave transfer program
VPR	Voluntary price reduction; vendor price reduction
VSIP	Voluntary separation incentive program
VTC	Video teleconference

W

WAR	Weekly activity report
WAT	Web action team
WCCS	World Class Customer Service (Award)
WCF	Working Capital Funds
Wee-Serv	AFCOMS version of an annex, branch store, or Mini-Com
WG	Wage grade (an employment classification for government employees)
WIC	Women, Infants and Children
WICO	Women, Infants, Children Overseas
WIN	What's Important Now [Gen. Dreska initiative]
WMD, WMDs	Weapons of mass destruction
WOSB	Woman-owned small businesses
WPA	The Works Progress Administration, a New Deal program that paid a wage in return for work. Types of work varied from physical labor to writing state histories to painting murals in federal office buildings and post offices.
WRM	War readiness materiel; war reserve material
WSC	(DeCA's) West Service Center

WWI, WWII	World War I, World War II
WWW	World Wide Web

X

XO	Executive officer
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Y

Y2K	Literally, "Year 2000."
Y2K Bug	In 1999, the term "Y2K bug" (sometimes shortened to just "Y2K") referred to the so-called "Millennium Bug" that was expected to foul up computers worldwide on January 1, 2000. (The fact that the new millennium wouldn't actually start until 2001 didn't prevent people from mislabeling the Y2K bug as "the Millennium Bug.")
YAL	Your Action Line, a program enabling customers to fill out a YAL card at their local commissary and contact DeCA to either complain about or praise the service their commissary was providing them.

Z

ZM	Zone manager
Zone	A group of commissaries in the same general geographical location. Similar in geographical size as complexes. A zone manager, based at an office in one of the zone's stores, would make frequent management trips to each of the stores in his or her zone.

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2006: NEW RIVER, North Carolina. Red and white onions spell "New River Produce" in a creative commissary display. The proud employees who helped build the display are (from left) produce manager Elizabeth Myers, and storeworkers Ed Reagan, Bill Dooley and Mattie Montanez. Storeworkers Zack Chandler and Don Dunn (not in picture) also contributed to the display effort. The Marine Corps Air Station New River Commissary was named "Best Small U.S. Store" in the Defense Commissary Agency's 7th Annual Produce Merchandising Contest for 2006. DeCA photo: Charlie Covington, New RiverStore administrator

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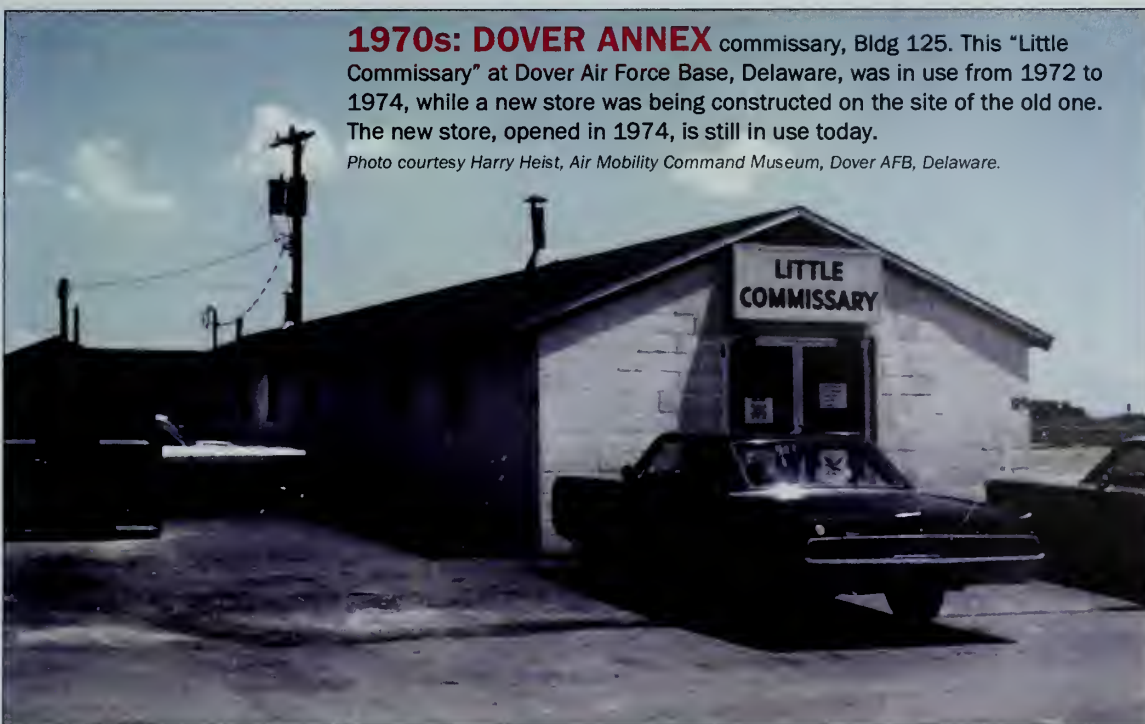
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1970s: DOVER ANNEX commissary, Bldg 125. This "Little Commissary" at Dover Air Force Base, Delaware, was in use from 1972 to 1974, while a new store was being constructed on the site of the old one. The new store, opened in 1974, is still in use today.

Photo courtesy Harry Heist, Air Mobility Command Museum, Dover AFB, Delaware.

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CAMP DREW, Japan. Located in the Tokyo area, Camp Drew was the 1st Cavalry Division's Artillery headquarters in postwar Japan. Between 1946 and 1954, this store served that post's military personnel, their families, and U.S. civilians working for the Department of Army. Photo courtesy William K. McKown and Gary McKown

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2007: FORT DRUM, New York. On Saturday, February 3, Mother Nature began to throw about 3 feet of snow on the post over a twenty-four-hour-period. Assistant Store Director Patty Mushtare arrived for work early the next day and decided to open the store on time. A total of twenty-two commissary employees, baggers and contractors braved the elements. The parking lot hadn't been plowed and blowing snow made it difficult to see anything. Customers started showing up and rushing in to get "emergency" food supplies. Several patrons pulled their sleds from the housing area just to do their shopping. One contract employee, Ernie Huntley, spent eleven straight hours blowing and moving snow so customers and employees could get to and from the store. Nearly five hundred customers rushed in early on Sunday and the store did just over \$25,000 in sales. "Everyone helped push and shovel," said Robert W. Smith, store director. "Many employees were offered rides by co-workers and were delighted to accept the offer. Every one waited until they were sure no one was left behind. I will always marvel at this workforce, they always pull together and never cease to amaze me." DeCA photo: Robert Smith, Fort Drum commissary

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1996: Fort Monroe, Virginia. Among the many things that made this an award-winning store were its outstanding fruit baskets, made-to-order by Joan Rogers and other produce department personnel. The baskets were so popular, even customers who normally shopped at other commissaries closer to their homes would place special-orders and drive the extra miles to pick them up at the Fort Monroe store. It was another example of commissaries catering to their customers' needs. DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt

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1997: ROOSEVELT ROADS, Puerto Rico. Although the Navy presence in Puerto Rico began in 1898 after the Spanish-American War, the base at Naval Station Roosevelt Roads did not open until 1943. It had a commissary by 1960, and the facility pictured here was built in 1979. In 1997, DeCA replaced it with a new store that had nearly twice the sales area. When the base at Roosevelt Roads was closed in 2004, DeCA had to close its store as well.

DeCA photo courtesy Roosevelt Roads commissary



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2006: OLA Germany!

The Sol Azteca (Aztec Sun) Mariachi Band gives their instruments a ride after their performance at the Hanau Commissary in recognition of National Hispanic Heritage Month.

DeCA photo: Jess Lira, Hanau commissary.

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2007: OKINAWA. Food and household products for the Okinawa commissaries are shipped through the island's Aja Port in Naha Harbor. In fiscal 2007, DeCA received 2,434 containers through this port. Once they are offloaded, the containers are placed on trucks and transported 5 kilometers to Camp Kinser, where DeCA's Okinawa central distribution center (CDC) is located. There, a team of seventy CDC workers breaks down the shipments and makes "just in time" daily deliveries to the Okinawa commissaries. DeCA photo: Glenn Capistrant

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1991: WINTER HARBOR, Maine. A commissary was initially approved for Naval Security Group Winter Harbor in 1968. The store, shown here in 1991, was built for other, undetermined purposes in 1953; the "Widow's Walk" on the roof is a common feature of homes in Maine. The store was small—only 3,550 square feet, with 3,865 line items and two registers—but it served the needs of the small community until the station closed in 2002.

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2002: PRESIDIO OF SAN FRANCISCO, California. From 1867 to 2002, customers and employees of the Presidio store enjoyed a spectacular view that included San Francisco Bay, the Marin Headlands, wildlife ranging from migratory birds flying above to sea lions cavorting in the bay below, and, since 1937, the Golden Gate Bridge... at least, that is, on days when the fog hadn't rolled in! *DeCA photo: Nancy O'Neill*



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1996: FORT RICHARDSON, Alaska. This view of the Fort Richardson commissary, taken in February 1996, demonstrates both the rugged beauty and the bracing winter weather of the largest and northernmost state in the union. This commissary was replaced in 1999 by a new facility, the Anchorage Area store, which inherited the clientele of both the Fort Richardson and the Elmendorf Air Force Base stores. *DeCA photo courtesy Fort Richardson commissary*



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- Morale, Welfare, and Recreation**



2007: BONJOUR FROM HEIDELBERG. Frenchman André Krengel, eighty-three-year-old bagger at Heidelberg Commissary, loads groceries for three-year-old Maeve Oravetz and her mother, Jennifer. Krengel, a bagger at the Heidelberg Commissary, Germany, for thirty years, began his relationship with Americans during World War II at Le Havre, France. He married an American woman, and they had two children and two grandchildren. Accompanying his wife, he ended up in Heidelberg where she worked for the Army. He eventually became a vendor stocker and then a bagger at the commissary. When his wife died six years ago after thirty-five years of marriage, he was able to continue his bagger duties. Seven days a week, Krengel rises at 4 a.m., and drives his twenty-nine-year-old, French-made Peugeot automobile from his home in nearby Leimen to the commissary, arriving by 7 a.m. He prepares the bagger stations by restocking bags, making sure the carts are ready and the area is presentable for business. He most often works the express line and is a favorite of many customers. *DeCA photo: Gerri Young*

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1991: RIYADH, Saudi Arabia. The U.S. Army has had a presence in Saudi Arabia since the early 1960s, and has had a commissary in Riyadh since 1966. This photo was taken shortly after the Gulf War of 1991, in a store built in the mid-1960s. In 1999, the commissary moved to a new building that it shares with the exchange and the APO. DeCA photo courtesy Riyadh commissary

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2007, RAF LAKENHEATH, England. Bill Driskell, the last chief of the Lakenheath Central Distribution Center (CDC), poses with the CDC warehouse behind him. This CDC handled its last trucks in January 2007, whereupon all stores and NEXMARTS in the United Kingdom began receiving product from DeCA distribution centers in Germersheim or Kaiserslautern, Germany. Personnel still on the rolls at the Lakenheath CDC completed the task of cleaning out and closing down the facility. The decision to close this operation was based in part upon the European Command's information regarding bases that would remain operational while others were phased out, and upon DeCA's focus on centralizing distribution product support.

CDC Lakenheath began as an Air Force Commissary Service (AFCOMS) warehouse and, when DeCA was created in 1991, it became a central distribution center, occupying the warehouse connected to the Lakenheath commissary. CDC Lakenheath had sent trucks as far north as RAF Edzell, Scotland, a two-day drive over country roads to a place where rabbits just might outnumber the people. Rainy weather and frequent traffic jams called "tail backs" could skew delivery schedules. When trucks leave Germany to head to the UK, they must stop at the large ferry terminal at Calais, France, line up and wait to drive aboard ship. The crossing of the English Channel and the drive to Lakenheath takes between three and four hours under normal conditions. Still, while dealing with English roads is often frustrating, its one-country, one-government process was considerably simpler than the many-country, many-governments process of transporting throughout the remainder of the European Region.

DeCA photo: Gerri Young

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2007, CAIRO, Egypt. When it comes to case lot sales with ambience, no place does it better than the Cairo commissary. Brilliantly colored tenting shields customers and employees from the sun and allows plenty of space for shopping. DeCA photo courtesy of Cairo commissary

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2006: ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Georgia. With good form and undivided concentration, a commissary produce worker pretends to wind up a throw in the store's "Bowl Yourself to a Healthy Lifestyle" display. Bags of celery form the gutters, potatoes make up the lane and gourds stand in for pins. In early 2007, the Robins commissary was named "Best Large U.S. Store" in the Defense Commissary Agency's 7th Annual Produce Merchandising Contest. DeCA photo courtesy Robins commissary

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2007: STUTTGART, Germany. Produce manager Sean Ferrell (wearing hat) and warehouse worker Dave Wells shovel snow in the parking lot of the Patch Barracks commissary. This is a common scene at many commissaries during the winter, from Europe to the northern United States, Alaska, Japan, and Korea. On this particular day (January 23), it was mid-morning when weather warnings for heavy snow were issued for eastern and southern Germany, with expected accumulations of eight to twelve inches of snow. This prompted the closure of many commissaries that had already opened for the day's business. Such closures are not taken lightly; they can seriously disrupt a commissary's operation, especially if deliveries are expected, but concern for the safety of customers and employees is the deciding factor. It is important to get all employees home safely before conditions make the roads extremely dangerous if not completely impassable. *DeCA photo courtesy Stuttgart commissary*

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2006, IMPERIAL BEACH, California. A few days before Thanksgiving, members of industry who support the Defense Commissary Agency joined together to give sixty food baskets to junior sailors stationed at Imperial Beach, California. Command Master Chief Mario Bautista and Capt. Hennes, executive officer Naval Base Coronado, attended the presentation to express their appreciation to the companies who donated and the commissary employees who helped assemble the baskets. Each basket contained a 13-17-pound turkey, a roasting pan, stuffing, mashed potatoes, gravy, vegetables, cranberry sauce, yams, dinner rolls, and a pumpkin pie. DeCA photo courtesy Imperial Beach commissary

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1999: C. E. Kelly Support Facility: Commissaries cater to the needs of their customers in many ways, and this is just one of many examples. The commissary at this post in Oakdale, Pennsylvania, near Pittsburgh, opened on a former Nike missile site in 1962, long before commissaries merited budgets for such things as altering pre-existing parking facilities. As a result, C. E. Kelly has a two-level lot, posing a problem for anyone parking in the lower area: Oakdale gets plenty of rain and snow, so walking between the store and the lower parking area can be difficult and unpleasant. In 1995, the store asked the post to build this “weather protection walkway” to assist its customers and their baggers/carryouts. This view shows a profile of the entire structure, which is 45 feet long and contains twelve stairs. *DeCA photo: Pete Skirbunt.* INSET: This view from 2004 shows the proximity of the walkway to the store. *DeCA photo: Janet Berry*

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